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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
PROTESTANT AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS IN THE
CANADIAN WEST TO 1870

by



FRITS PANNEKOEK

The undersigned certify that they have read, and
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance
a thesis entitled "Protestant Agricultural Missions in the
Canadian West to 1870" submitted by Frits Pannekoek, as
partial fulfillment of

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the efforts of three evangelical Protestant denominations, the Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians to establish agricultural missions in the Canadian prairie west from 1820 to 1870. Their success was marginal, with no missionary achieving the ultimate goal of self-sufficient predominantly agricultural and Indian communities. Their existence was never more than fragile. Agriculture was retarded, only in a few cases spontaneous, and always ancillary to the hunt and trip.

The Hudson's Bay Company except in the early 1820's and late 1830's was consistently opposed to the expansion of the missions outside the confines of Red River. This opposition was however ineffective and if anything assisted the spread of the missions. Benjamin Harrison, an Evangelical on the London Committee of the Company, persuaded the Committee to introduce the first missionary John West, an Anglican, but the latter's outspoken criticism dampened the Company's enthusiasm. The supposedly more pliable Methodists, introduced to stop the Indian migrations to Red River, were equally in disgrace by 1848 and the Company turned again to the Anglicans. By 1864, the same year the Presbyterians established their only mission, the Company had abandoned its futile attempt to control the missions and left them to their own devices.

The missionaries were responsible in large part for

the failure of the missions. The Anglicans were unable to change their idyllic conception of agriculture to suit the harsh environment of the West. The Methodists were reluctant to impose civilization, and therefore agriculture, until Christianity was firmly established. The Presbyterians were divided, the missionary adhering to the Anglican and the mission board to the Methodist view. All denominations believed the Indian inferior, incapable of existence without the missionary's protection and leadership.

The missionary saw this inferiority as the cause of the repeated failure of agricultural experiment. Success it was felt could be achieved if the Indian were taught sufficient diligence and bountiful aid were extended. Until a complete conversion was made the hunt, fisheries, and trip would be tolerated. Unfortunately given the harsh climate at the majority of the missions, the geography of the Canadian Shield and absence of a substantial market, agriculture could scarcely function as a sound base for the mission economy. The constant exhortation to pursue agriculture, the continued failure and the missionary's equally continuous assistance combined with the decline in wildlife after 1860 to cement the Indian to the missionary. After 1870 with the disappearance of the principal means of support, i.e., the hunt, trip and fisheries and renewed increase in population the missions collapsed. They failed to survive the nineteenth century--few if any managed to sustain the fragile prosperity experienced from 1840 to 1860.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- C.M.S.A. Church Missionary Society Archives, microfilm deposited in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.
- H.B.C.A. Hudson's Bay Company Archives, microfilm deposited in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.
- M.M.S.A. Methodist Missionary Society Archives, microfilm deposited in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa
- P.A.C. Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.
- P.A.M. Public Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg.
- S.P.G.A. Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archives, microfilm deposited in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1870 the romantic William Francis Butler could still evoke an image of the Canadian Prairie West as "the Great Lone Land."¹ Yet it was not a land devoid of settlement. By that date three distinct types had evolved: Red River, fur trade and missionary. While it was only in the Red River valley at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine that a relatively extensive and self-sufficient agricultural community developed, fur post settlements could and did range from an ill-kept hut surrounded by an equally ill-kept potato patch to substantial structures and fields of twenty to forty acres. The missionary establishments were unique in that unlike the Red River and fur trade variety they were not purposefully oriented to the fur economy of the Canadian West. Indeed their goal of "Christianity and civilization" was often in conflict with it. Generally uncomplicated, these settlements consisted of a Catholic or Protestant clergyman providing the spiritual and secular guidance for a few, or in some cases as many as eight hundred mixed-blood and/or Indian converts.²

¹Capt. W. F. Butler, The Great Lone Land (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low & Searle, 1873).

²In this thesis country-born will refer to English half-breeds, Metis to French Canadian half-breeds and mixed-bloods to half-breeds in general.

Under the supervision of Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian missionary societies, the Protestant variety increased from one in 1833 to over a dozen in 1870. While the missionary effort is a story of fortitude, perseverance and heroism, it is also one of failure. The total Indian populations involved never exceeded twenty-five hundred and only two of the settlements, Rossville and St. Peter's ever attracted more than six hundred. Furthermore agriculture was marginal and subsistent, starvation frequent and progress always wavering. The causes can be sought in the opposition of the Hudson's Bay Company, the climate, the geography, the Indian, and the missionary and his cultural predilections and the plans they dictated for the Indian's redemption. The missions never survived the transition to the twentieth century, collapsing as the fur frontier retreated rapidly northward in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

The Catholic missions have been excluded for two reasons. First their addition would have presented an overwhelming bulk of primary material, much more than viable for a study of this nature. Second and more important their work was based on a culture as well as theology distinct from that of their Protestant counterparts. The Catholic missionaries were without exception French or French Canadian. Because of these differences and the animosity they engendered there was a minimum of co-operation and much antagonism. Rev. John West, the first Protestant missionary, made this most apparent.

Nor can I imagine that the system taught by the Canadian Catholic priests will avail any thing materially in benefitting the morals of the people; they are bigotted to opinions which are calculated to fetter the human mind, to cramp human exertions, and keep their dependents on perpetual leading strings . . . While they multiply holidays, to the interruption of human industry, . . . they lightly regard the Sabbath, . . . I thank God that I am Protestant against such idolatry and ecclesiastical tyranny.³

The Catholic missions never intermingled with the Protestant. At Red River for example the Catholics dominated the parishes of Baie St. Paul, St. François Xavier, St. Charles and St. Boniface on the Assiniboine and all those on the Red River south of the forks. The Protestant English speaking population was concentrated on the banks of the Red north of the forks and in the parishes of St. Mary's, St. Margaret's, St. Anne's, Holy Trinity and St. James on the Assiniboine. This strict division based on religion was perpetuated throughout the West and no mission proved the exception.

The term mission merits further clarification. To the various Protestant societies mission signified not only conversion but the increase of Christian devotion and the redemption of the wayward. In addition mission was characterized by dependence, especially financial.⁴ These stipulations would make the whole of Rupert's Land, including

³John West, Substance of a Journal (London: L. B. Seeley and Son, 1824), p. 121.

⁴Rev. William Knight, The Missionary Secretariat of Henry Venn (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1880), p. 307. See also C.M.S.A., C.1/M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, July 30, 1827. Since all documents from the C.M.S.A. used in this study are from C.1 "North America, Rupert's Land" the classification will not be repeated.

the English-speaking parishes of Red River a mission. A distinct division, a division the missionaries themselves realized, between mission for conversion and that for reinforcement of Christianity can however be made.⁵ Most of the retired servants and commissioned gentlemen knew the rudiments of Christianity and agriculture though each was practiced haphazardly.⁶ The concern here is not with these missions of reinforcement but instead with the missions of conversion--the Indian communities. More specifically the concern is with their conversion to a sedentary agricultural life. It was this life, the missionary believed, that above all other received God's blessing. It was a life inseparable from Christianity. The Christian mission was then equally an agricultural one.⁷

Geographical as well as topical limitations must be imposed. The area under consideration extends from the Rocky Mountains to the Red River and Lake Winnipeg region and from the forty-ninth parallel northward. The north branch of the Saskatchewan River serves as a reasonably accurate northern boundary if allowances are made for Stanley

⁵West, op. cit., compare the Preface and pp. 25-7. Though this division was not explicit it was implied.

⁶C.M.S.A., O, Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833, contains a description of the state of the English half-breed. It is quoted at some length by John Foster, "The Anglican Clergy in the Red River Settlement: 1822-1826" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1966), pp. 91-2.

⁷See for example C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran, Journal, Oct. 16, 1831.

and Whitefish.

These four boundaries are by no means arbitrary. The Rocky Mountains deterred especially the Methodists from extending their work on the prairies into the Pacific West. The various missionary societies considered British Columbia a unique region. In no case were its missions under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rupert's Land or the Methodist Chairman at Rossville and later Victoria.⁸ The southern boundary was political, marking the division between British North America and the United States. The Saskatchewan, the northern boundary, marked a frontier beyond which the agricultural missions no longer appeared a viable concept. This is not to suggest that all regions north of the Saskatchewan were infertile but merely that settlement was retarded. For example, at Dunvegan in the Peace River country the first agricultural mission was only established in 1879. The Rev. Robert MacDonald's and Rev. William Carpenter Bompas's work at Fort Simpson and Fort Yucon was religious rather than agricultural.⁹ The climate permitted little else. The same can be said of the efforts at Churchill and York.

⁸T. C. B. Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1962), p. v. See also J. H. Riddell, Methodism in the Middle West (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1946), p. 7.

⁹Boon, op. cit., pp. 204-13. See also C.M.S.A., O, Rev. William Carpenter Bompas, Journal, 1865-1869, Rev. Wm. Kirkby, Journal, 1861-1868 and Robert M. MacDonald, Journal, 1865-1868.

Three denominations and six missionary societies were involved in propagating the gospel in Rupert's Land. Of the six three were Anglican: the Church Missionary Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts and the Colonial and Continental Church Society. Of these only the Church Missionary Society was seriously involved in the Indian missions of conversion, supporting over thirty-five missionaries from 1820 to 1870.¹⁰ The Colonial and Continental Church Society sponsored two missionaries, the Rev. John Chapman (1849-1867) and Rev. G. O. Corbett (1852-1863), but neither ventured beyond their respective charges of Middlechurch and Headingly. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, an offspring of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, was hardly more involved. Of its three agents, the Rev. W. H. Taylor (1850-1861), the Rev. T. Cockran (1854-1859) and the Rev. T. Cook (1862-1874) only the latter was stationed outside Red River and his success was at most marginal.

The initiative for the formation of the Church Missionary Society in 1799 came from the Clapham Sect though in more general terms it was a product of the evangelical

¹⁰The surnames of the more famous include: Anderson, Bompas, Budd, Cockran, Cowley, Fleming, Gardiner, George, Hale, Hillyer, Horden, Hunt, Hunter, James, Jones, Kirkby, MacDonald, Mackay, Machray, MacLean, Mason, Mayhew, Pambrun, Phair, Pratt, Roberts, Settee, Smith, Smithurst, Stagg, Umpherville, Vincent, Watkins and West. It must be emphasized that the purpose of this study is not to provide a chronology of missionary activity or a series of biographies. Boon, op. cit., does both adequately.

revival of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The Society was formed in opposition or perhaps more accurately to complement the activities of the interdenominational London Missionary Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Neither was felt to reflect the beliefs of the Evangelicals, the London Missionary Society because it worked without the Episcopacy and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel because it was dominated by the church establishment, an establishment which regarded the Evangelicals with disfavor. The cleavage between the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society widened during the bitterness of the Oxford Movement. At one point union of the two societies under the episcopate was proposed. The Church Missionary Society however dismissed this as Tractarian subversion. Though the theoretical control of the episcopate over the Society was strengthened, actual control remained with the Committee and its Secretaries. The split may account in large part for the absence of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Rupert's Land. The Church Missionary Society Bishop could hardly be expected to encourage the rival Society and the high church views to which it adhered.¹¹

Josiah Pratt was the dominant Secretary prior to 1824

¹¹For complete histories of the two societies see E. Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society (4 vols.; London: The Church Missionary Society, 1899) and C. F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G. (2 vols.; London: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1901).

and Henry Venn from 1841 to 1872. Both were driving forces behind the Society and much of its vigor and success is attributable directly to their efforts. The period between 1824 and 1841 can be considered an interregnum. Edward Bickersteth, Pratt's successor, undertook much of the fatherly correspondence with the missionaries while Dandeson Coates, Assistant Secretary and later Lay Secretary conducted the daily operations of the Society. The missionaries did not always correspond with the principal Secretary. Often their requests and problems were delegated as under Venn's Secretariat to one of the various assistant secretaries, in 1859 Knight, Chapman, Straith, Dawes and Holl. The relationship between the Secretariat and the missionaries can be "likened to that between a leader and a disciple." The clergy looked to the Secretaries not only for "direction and financial support but for spiritual sustenance" ¹²

Other than the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel the Church Missionary Society was the only missionary society involved in Rupert's Land to establish a college or more appropriately an institute for the training of its agents, Islington College. Many of Rupert's Land's missionaries like Henry Budd, Jr., Abraham Cowley, James Hunter, Robert Hunt, E. A. Watkins, and T. T. Smith studied at the College. The institute accepted students with extremely diverse backgrounds. Some were Cambridge graduates, some natives like Budd, and

¹²Foster, op. cit., p. 43.

others stone masons like Cowley. The principal instruction appears however to have been theological. Practical arts like agriculture were not on the curriculum.¹³

Unlike the Church Missionary Society, an Evangelical lay not official Church agency, the Wesleyan and Presbyterian missionary efforts were efforts of the church. The Wesleyan missions in Rupert's Land were sponsored by two societies often acting together and less often in opposition, the Canadian Conference Missionary Society and the British Wesleyan Missionary Society. The former, founded in 1824 as a committee of the Canadian Conference, was also an auxiliary of the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society of the United States. Independence was achieved in 1828. The British Wesleyan Missionary Society was founded in 1817-1818 as the official Methodist body for missionary work, an expansion of the previous Committee of Finance and Advice and several auxiliary agencies. In 1833 when Canadian and British Methodism united, the missions were placed under the superintendence of the British Wesleyan Missionary Society. Unfortunately in 1840 the union, unable to contain the societies' opposing views on clergy reserves, collapsed. A number of missions and more important the financial resources remained under the control of the British Society. It was during this schism (1840-1847) that the British Society

¹³Stock, op. cit., II, pp. 70-81.

established its missions in Rupert's Land.¹⁴ They were however considered foreign missions of the British Society unconnected with its activities in the Canadian Conference. After 1847 and reunion missionary work was again a joint effort. While each society retained its own missions and bureaucracy, the General Superintendent of Missions, Enoch Wood, was appointed by the British Society. The Canadian Conference Society was considered no more than an auxiliary society. By 1853 however the Canadian Conference had sufficiently recovered from the 1840's to assume control of the Hudson's Bay missions, a control which the destitute British Society could no longer afford.¹⁵ These missions were considered on the same footing as the Indian missions in Canada, as home rather than foreign missions. Perhaps even more than the Church Missionary Society the Wesleyan Societies were concerned with the native missions of conversion. The first of their approximately twenty missionaries, Rev. George Young, was dispatched to Red River itself in 1868.¹⁶

¹⁴John Carroll, Case and His Contemporaries . . . A Biographical History of Methodism in Canada (Toronto: Methodist Conference Office, 1877), IV, pp. 273-8. When James Evans of the Canadian Conference consented to accept the chairmanship of the Hudson's Bay Missions offered by Dr. Robert Alder, General Secretary of the British Wesleyan Missionary Society, he was condemned a traitor. Evans apparently had to sever all connections with the Canadian Conference when he accepted the position.

¹⁵Ibid., V, p. 77.

¹⁶A brief outline of the history of the two societies can be gleaned from Riddell, op. cit., and F. C. Stephenson,

The Presbyterians only managed to equip one interior mission, Prince Albert. Of the five missionaries it sponsored Rev. John Black, Rev. James Nisbet, Rev. Alexander Matheson, Rev. William Fletcher and Rev. John Macnab only Nisbet worked with the Indians. The Presbyterian missions were sponsored by the Foreign Missions Committee of the Synod of the Canada Presbyterian Church, a product of the 1861 union of the United Presbyterian Synod and (Free) Presbyterian Church of Canada.¹⁷

The period of Protestant missions 1820-1870 coincided with an era of unprecedented peace and unity in the Northwest. The Montreal based North West Company and London chartered Hudson's Bay Company had terminated their ruinous rivalry in the Deed Poll of March 26, 1821. The conflict had been a bitter one, accompanied by debauchery, massacre, intolerable fur prices, and in the areas of competition a decrease in the animal fur-bearing population. Had such deplorable conditions continued it is unlikely that any missionary could have penetrated the interior. If he had his missions would have been destroyed.

One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions 1824-1924 (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1925). Some of the more famous Methodist missionaries were Barnley, Brooking, Campbell, Evans, Hurlburt, Jacobs, Jones, McDougall, Mason, Rundle, Steinhauer, Stringfellow, Woolsey, and Young.

¹⁷A useful pamphlet on the Presbyterian missions is, Committee of the Executive of the Twentieth Century Fund, Historic Sketches of the Pioneer Work and the Missionary, Educational and Benevolent Agencies of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (Toronto: Murray Printing Co., 1903).

After 1821 governed by the strict, evenhanded and impersonal George Simpson the whole administration of Rupert's Land was restructured. Although the Governor and Committee of seven major shareholders in London were his superiors, Simpson determined much of the policy. He emphasized efficiency and attempted to develop the fur trade to its fullest potential. In brief he consolidated the Company's northern fur empire. London instead of Montreal became the fur trade metropolis. Had Canada retained her pre-eminence, the source for Protestant missionaries might have been other than Britain. As it was the Catholic missionaries remained as one of the few connections with Montreal.

This reign of peace was unfortunately not unmarred. After 1840 it was disrupted by American encroachment and the "evils" of free trade. There was also a westward expansion of the Canadian frontier, bothersome and sometimes embarrassing investigations by the Imperial government and, equally important, a northward retreat of the fur frontier. It was in these years of transition that the Protestant agricultural missions were most active.¹⁸

¹⁸For a full account of the history of the Canadian West after the Deed Poll see A. S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1939), p. 623f, and E. E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1960), III.

II. THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

Since no aspect of life in the West could escape regulation by the Hudson's Bay Company, proprietor of Rupert's Land by virtue of its 1670 patent, it has been traditional to assign this hated monopoly the preponderant responsibility for the shortcomings of the missions. John McLean's Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory¹ and A. K. Isbister's "Memorial and Petition" to Earl Grey in 1847 provide two of the more vitriolic indictments. The latter denounced the Company for

keeping the native in a state of utter dependence, and peptuating (sic) the wandering and precarious life of the hunter, on which they erroneously consider the existence of the fur trade to depend, they have permitted generation after generation of the hapless race consigned to their care to pass their lives in the darkest heathenism. There is not at present, nor, . . . has there even been, a single Indian school, church, or other establishment for religious and general instruction, established by the Company, throughout the whole of their extensive territories. What little has been done for the religious and moral improvement of the natives is wholly due to the persevering exertions of the Church Missionary Society, and . . . the Wesleyan Society of London. [They] receive no assistance whatsoever from the Company . . . Their deity is gold, to obtain which they trample down Christianity and benevolence.²

¹John McLean, Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory (London: R. Bentley, 1849), pp. 316-7.

²Great Britain. Colonial Office. Hudson's Bay Company. (Red River Settlement.) Return to an address . . . dated 9 February, 1849 (London: 1849), pp. 1-4. H.B.C.A., A.13/3, fo. 29f contains a slightly different

Isbister continued to tar the Company with the blackest and hottest possible pitch. That the Company did attempt to restrict the location and number of the missions is indisputable but whether this factor stifled their development is questionable. The Company's motives were infinitely more complex than the single mercenary one Isbister considers so obvious and the results of their policy were hardly as detrimental as he believed.

Company policy emanated from three principal sources: the London Committee, the overseas governor, and the Council of the Northern Department; occasionally it was influenced by a fourth, the commissioned gentlemen. The ultimate decision on any policy rested with the Governor and Committee in London.³ It is perhaps indicative of the importance which the Governor and Committee attached to the evangelization of the native that by 1839 the overseas governor, George Simpson, had been allowed to gain almost absolute control over missionary policy. Only in rare instances was Simpson overruled. The Northern Council's only function was that of rubber stamp. Its regulation of the cost of supplies, transportation and accommodation for the missionaries was merely an extension of Simpson's policies.

There is without doubt more than a germ of truth in

version. The form for H.B.C.A. footnotes will be that used by the Champlain and Hudson's Bay Record Societies.

³Morton, op. cit., p. 624.

the many accusations of Company opposition to mission settlements, for the overseas governors were often less than charitable. Yet evangelistic interests on the part of the London Committee in the early decades of the 1800's were not entirely absent.⁴ An impolitic criticism of the Company and its servants by John West, the first missionary to Rupert's Land, served however to dampen most of their philanthropic ardour.⁵ The influence of Benjamin Harrison, a lesser Clapham saint and member of the Committee from 1807-1854 responsible for the presence of John West and the Church Missionary Society, was seriously curbed. While his correspondence with the missions as a private individual continued, that as a Committee member virtually ceased. It is perhaps a measure of the Committee's evangelical zeal and Harrison's own declining influence that he found it necessary to warn the Rev. David Jones and the Rev. William Cockran to take care to avoid West's mistake, i.e., not to ". . . cast any reflection on any of the Servants of the Company."⁶

⁴H.B.C.A., A.6/9, fos. 57d.-58, Committee to James Bird, May 20, 1818.

⁵C.M.S.A., M.1, West, Report, Dec. 2, 1823.

⁶Ibid., L.1, Secretary to Cockran, March 20, 1839. This is one of the last letters in which the activities of Benjamin Harrison are mentioned. The cause and effect relationship of the West unpleasantness and the decline in Harrison's influence and the Committee's evangelical attitude is not entirely certain. In no document is this stated outright. Those cited in the three above footnotes however intimate that this was at least partially the case. It could be conjectured that West's blunder was totally

After the West episode the commercial motives which had in fact always been present predominated and interest on the part of the Committee lagged.⁷ In the following decades the Committee only infrequently voiced their concern over the effect of the mission settlements on the fur trade.⁸ Even more infrequently they would inquire as to the moral progress of the natives.⁹ An occasional evangelical prod would result in the negotiation for Wesleyan missionaries,¹⁰ but as will be seen even this can be attributed to commercial motives.

Contrary to A. S. Morton's conclusions the burden of responsibility for mission policy indeed fell to Simpson.¹¹ It was to him that all the missionaries directed their abuse and requests. While his considerable correspondence on missions lacks evangelical feeling, he was neither as heartless

immaterial and that the Committee's declining evangelicalism was due to Harrison's absence caused by his growing interest in Guy's Hospital. This theory does not however account for his personal letters to the missions, of which at least one was unfavorable to the Company.

⁷H.B.C.A., A.6/20, Committee to Simpson, Feb. 22, 1822; and D.5/1, fo. 31, Committee to Simpson, March 1, 1822.

⁸Ibid., D.5/48, fo. 99, Committee to Simpson, April 14, 1859.

⁹Ibid., A.6/23, fos. 9-10, Committee to Simpson, March 1, 1833; A.6/25, fo. 26d., Committee to Simpson, March 20, 1839; and A.6/28, fo. 115, Committee to Simpson, March, 1850.

¹⁰Ibid., D.4/25, fo. 62, Simpson to Rev. Dr. Alder, Jan. 22, 1840.

¹¹A. S. Morton, Sir George Simpson (Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons Limited, 1944), pp. 69-70.

as E. E. Rich¹² nor as co-operative as T. C. B. Boon respectively suggest.¹³ Even if Simpson's flashes of humanitarianism were not always translated into policy he expressed what would appear to be genuine concern over the disappearance of the buffalo and the inevitable starvation of the Indian. In spite of these philanthropic moments his motivations as the Committee's were secular, based on a desire to limit the missionary societies from over-extension, and to prevent their becoming a burden to the fur trade.

This desire to limit agricultural missions is the rationale governing all the Company's policies. Even the choice of denomination, the assistance provided in travel and living accommodation rose from this single objective. It was only a gross policy miscalculation in 1839--the admission of the Methodists to contain Indian migration--that triggered an expansion of agricultural missions the overseas governor, George Simpson, could have envisaged only in his worst nightmare.

Initially the Committee had not contemplated extension of missionary activity beyond the confines of Red River. An 1818 feasibility study, in all likelihood initiated by Benjamin Harrison and Nicolas Garry, another member of the London Committee with Evangelical tendencies, suggested that evangelization of the Indian would best be limited to this

¹²Rich, op. cit., p. 528.

¹³Boon, op. cit., p. 4. Boon's opinion grows harsher as the book progresses.

region.¹⁴ The Committee later elaborated on this proposal. They felt that "the extreme poverty of the Country" rendered it impossible to keep any considerable number of Indians together.¹⁵ The only effective method would be to establish schools at Red River where the children would be

educated with due regard to morality and Religion and afterward sent back to their relations for the purpose of instructing them, the vacancies to be filled up from the same or other Tribes as might be considered advisable.¹⁶

The limitations of this policy were evident even to Simpson as early as 1825. In a letter to the Committee he commented that he could not see

. . . that any regular plan connected with religious improvement and education can be attempted with any prospect of success among the Indians until agriculture and not the chase, becomes their main pursuit, . . .¹⁷

Simpson was not however prepared to do more than comment. When Cockran asked for permission in 1831 to found a settlement at Sugar Point near the outlet of the Red River, it was given only with great hesitation, and in expectation if not hope of failure.¹⁸ Simpson's opposition

¹⁴H.B.C.A., A.6/19, fos. 57d-58, Committee to James Bird, May 20, 1818.

¹⁵Ibid., A.12/2, fo. 17, Committee to Simpson, Aug. 1, 1823.

¹⁶Ibid., D.4/3, fo. 74, Simpson to Harrison, Aug. 8, 1824.

¹⁷Ibid., D.4/88, fo. 82, Simpson to Committee, Aug. 4, 1825.

¹⁸C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 7, 1828; M.2, Cockran to the Secretary (marked private), Oct. 23, 1834; and M.2, Cockran, Journal, Oct. 9, 1837.

was not without reason. He feared Cockran's proposal lest it should in due time become dangerous to the whites of the Settlement, who are already greatly outnumbered by the Indian and Half breed population.¹⁹

Simpson also doubted any agricultural community's ability to survive without the Company's assistance.²⁰ Furthermore and perhaps most important the fur trade was still profitable. The missions would only serve to draw the native from the trade. This neither the Committee nor Simpson were ready to allow "until Deer and Buffalo [became] so scarce as no longer to afford . . . the means of living."²¹

Surprisingly, the initial impetus for extension beyond the confines of Red River came not from Jones or Cockran, both absorbed with the Indian Settlement, but from the Hudson's Bay Company. By 1835 it was becoming increasingly apparent that it would be impossible to limit agricultural missions to Cockran's single effort. Three considerations were operative: the migrations of Indians from the Lower Districts, and from the vicinity of York Factory,²² Norway House, and Cumberland House to Red River; the push of the Catholics into the interior; and the growing

¹⁹H.B.C.A., A.12/1, fo. 458, Simpson to Committee, Aug. 10, 1832.

²⁰Ibid., A.12/13, fo. 117d., Eden Colville to Simpson, July 21, 1832.

²¹Ibid., D.4/88, fo. 82, Simpson to Committee, Aug. 4, 1825.

²²Ibid., D.4/23, fo. 117, Simpson to Murdoch

independence of the Church Missionary Society.

To 1832 the migrations had been negligible, but by 1835 they had reached what Simpson considered dangerous proportions. Several factors were important in precipitating these migrations, the largest from the Cumberland House area. Several Cumberland Indians related by marriage to retired servants settled at Red River were by 1832 paying regular visits to their relatives and finding employment by reaping, haymaking, fencing and ditching. This temporary employment, paid for in provisions and clothing, gave the native a "taste of civilized life" and induced several families to settle at Red River.²³ At the same time it was becoming apparent especially during the severe winters of the early 1830's that the resources of the Cumberland area were no longer capable of supporting the Indian population.²⁴

The Committee attached an entirely different interpretation to the migrations. They felt that the death of Mr. Leith, in charge of Cumberland House, and the less conciliatory system of management of his successor was the paramount factor.²⁵ The attractions of the Indian Settlement, Cockran's Netley and Cook's Creek mission founded in the

McPherson, Feb. 28, 1838.

²³Ibid., A.12/1, fo. 458, Simpson to Committee, Aug. 10, 1832.

²⁴Ibid., fo. 459.

²⁵Ibid., D.5/5, fo. 29, Committee to Simpson, March

early 1830's, should not be disregarded. Only its existence provides a plausible explanation for the migrations from the other areas and Simpson's comment that "a mania for colonization had seized the native."²⁶

As important in the Company's decision to allow Protestant expansion was the fact that by 1838 the Roman Catholics centred at Red River were pushing for an extension of their missions from Red River.²⁷ Donald Ross, Chief Factor of Norway House, feared that the Catholics would soon have possession of the whole of the Swan River and Saskatchewan Districts.²⁸ The Committee and Simpson quite concurred in Ross's firm belief that

however good and worthy many of their individuals certainly are they are most rigidly ruled and guided by a foreign interest . . . almost invisible in its proceedings.²⁹

Initially in 1838 Simpson felt that if agriculture could be introduced at Cumberland House the migrations would cease.³⁰ The Committee appeared favorable but cautioned

7, 1838.

²⁶Ibid., D.4/23, fo. 117, Simpson to McPherson, Feb. 28, 1838.

²⁷A. G. Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada (Toronto: The Musson Book Company, Limited, 1910), I, p. 148.

²⁸H.B.C.A., B.154/c/1, fo. 69, Ross to Simpson, Aug. 3, 1840.

²⁹Ibid., D.5/6, fo. 123, Ross to Simpson, April 10, 1842.

³⁰Ibid., D.4/23, fo. 117, Simpson to McPherson, Feb. 28, 1838.

Simpson from acting, preferring instead to see if the appointment of a more moderate Chief Factor to Cumberland House would be sufficient.³¹ Pressure was also concurrently applied to Cockran to discourage migrant natives from locating at the Indian Settlement.³² The Committee's expedients must have failed for in 1839 Simpson's 1838 proposal was extended to include a missionary to be attached to no society but responsible solely to the Company.³³

Instead of following this policy to its logical conclusion Simpson and/or the Committee proceeded to initiate what would appear to be a most puzzling reversal--the introduction of the Methodist Missionary Society. If the Committee had intended to work through a society the most logical choice would have been the Church Missionary Society. Indications are however that by 1839 Simpson and the Rev. William Cockran were on less than friendly terms. According to the Rev. John Smithurst, dispatched in 1839 as Company chaplain and missionary-prospect for Cumberland, Simpson had deluded the Church Missionary Society into believing that the Indian Settlement should be dispersed and an alternate settlement commenced at Cumberland. Upon

³¹Ibid., D.5/5, fo. 29, Committee to Simpson, March 7, 1838.

³²Ibid., B.235/c/1, fo. 32, Committee to Duncan Finlayson, March 4, 1840.

³³Ibid., D.5/106, fo. 34, Simpson to Committee, July 8, 1839.

his arrival Smithurst, obviously under Cockran's influence, refused either to assume his appointment as Company chaplain or to abandon the Indians at Netley Creek. The Company fearing a public row in which Cockran could only win, left the Indians in possession of their missionaries. Since Cockran and Smithurst refused to abandon the Indian Settlement, the Church Missionary Society in March of 1840 made application for the dispatch of two additional missionaries for the founding of the Cumberland House settlement. Smithurst maintains that an angry Company refused the application.³⁴

This accusation would appear valid but is difficult to substantiate by further reference in either the Company's or Church Missionary Society's archives. T. C. B. Boon suggests that financial difficulties afflicting the Church Missionary Society were the primary reason for the failure to send the two missionaries, not a Company veto.³⁵ While this may have been the case, Cockran never believed it and proceeded to found the settlement through Henry Budd, a native catechist, in defiance of Simpson's wishes.

Cockran had found approval for this mission not through the Committee or Simpson but from an oblique reference in an outdated letter from Benjamin Harrison. Harrison's letter had been written in March of 1839 one

³⁴C.M.S.A., M.2, Smithurst to the Secretary, Aug. 5, 1840.

³⁵Boon, op. cit., p. 49n.

full year before the Company had "refused" permission to the two missionaries and approximately half a year prior to the Smithurst-Cockran episode over the abandonment of the Indian Settlement. In spite of this discrepancy, Cockran remained adamant that permission for the establishment of The Pas had been granted and would not countenance Simpson's suggestions that it be abandoned to the Wesleyans. Simpson, not willing to carry the dispute further, gave Cockran "permission to persevere."³⁶

Far from being illogical then, the Committee's and/or Simpson's appointment³⁷ of the Wesleyans would appear, although this is nowhere explicitly stated, to be a move to check migration, outflank the Catholics and curb the growing independence of Cockran and the Church Missionary Society. This certainly appears more conceivable than Riddell's explanation that Simpson had been enchanted by the "success of the Methodists in the Indian work in Upper

³⁶C.M.S.A., M.2, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 4, 1841. Harrison's letter of March 1839 was found neither in the H.B.C.A. or C.M.S.A. The only reference to it is by Cockran in the above letter. Curiously this is the same letter that Boon uses to substantiate his theory that financial difficulties were the primary reason for the failure to dispatch the two missionaries. Although this could be implied from the letter if interpreted in a most generous light, the events as explained above appear much more likely especially when used in conjunction with Smithurst's letter of Aug. 4, 1840, Supra, p. 23n.

³⁷M.M.S.A., Committee Minutes, Dec. 1838, pp. 113-117. The Committee's minutes are confusing in that they make reference to both Simpson and the London Committee of the Company as initiating the negotiations.

Canada."³⁸ The Wesleyans were considered as pliable, amenable to Company control and unlikely to engage in establishing large agricultural missions without the Company's explicit permission. This is precisely the light in which Cockran saw their appointment. As far as he was concerned all

. . . in the Fur Trade are enemies to Christianity and Civilization. The Fur Trade can only be a lucrative concern while the inhabitants are in a state of barbarism; the more the Indians approximate the wolf in his character, the better hunter he will make This will enable you to understand why the Company are giving preference to the Wesleyans Mark the doctrine of the Wesleyans. We will not civilize one family. Rupert's Land is destined by God to remain forever in a state of barbarism. We shall only preach the Gospel to the Indian to comfort him when he is travelling thro the wood. This is very charitable indeed! They propose that the body of the Indians should be made over as a legacy for the benefit of the Fur Trade and his soul made an offering to God.³⁹

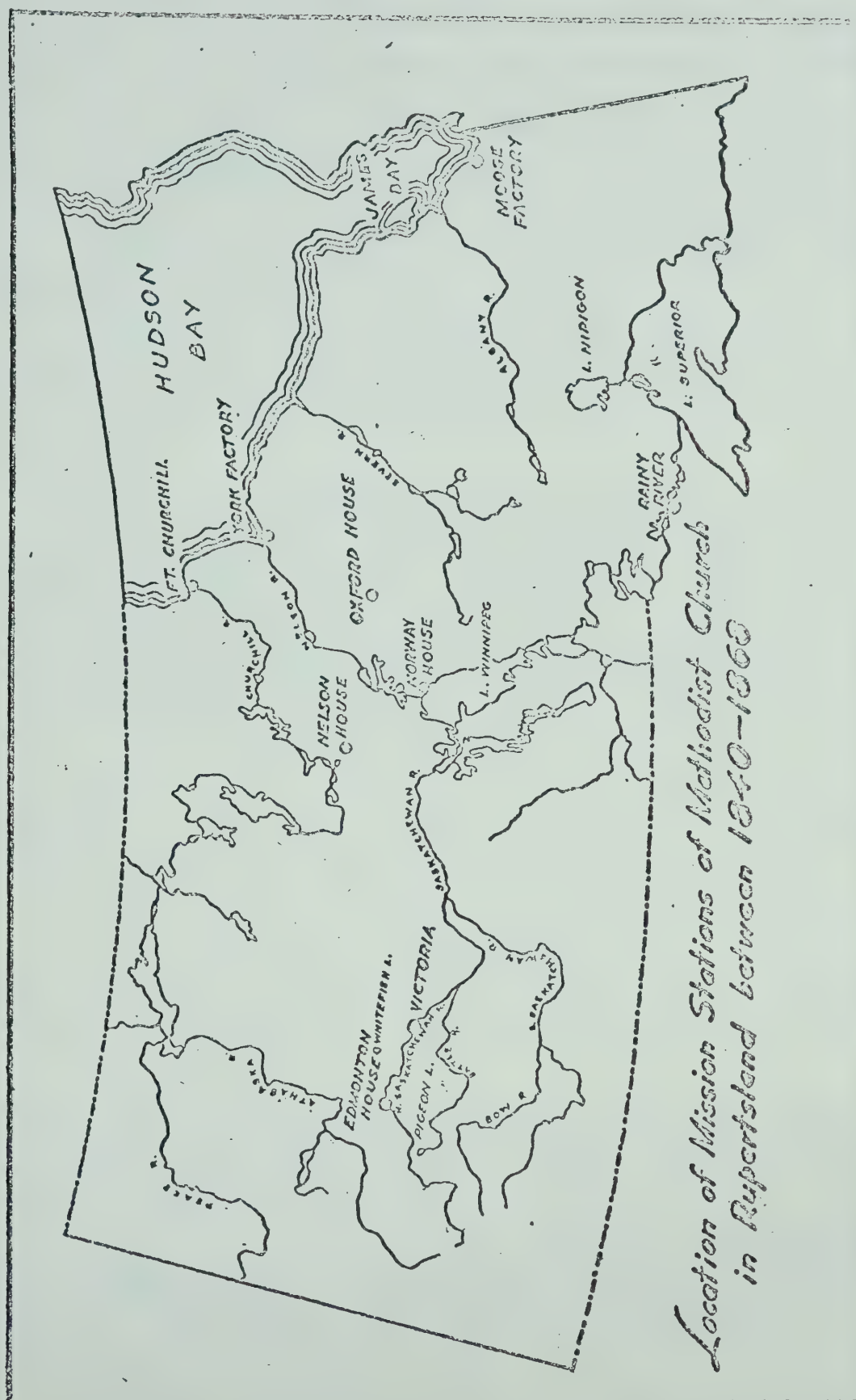
Edmonton, Norway House, Lac La Pluie and Moose were chosen by Simpson as the mission stations.⁴⁰ Edmonton, Lac La Pluie and Moose were to stop Catholic incursions; and Norway House to stem the migrations as well as to lend a touch of morality to the small Indian village that the Company had allowed to grow there since 1828.⁴¹ Only at

³⁸Riddell, op. cit., p. 7.

³⁹C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug 1, 1840. The emphasis is Cockran's.

⁴⁰H.B.C.A., D.4/25, fo. 62, Simpson to Alder, Jan. 22, 1840.

⁴¹M.M.S.A., Box 20, Letter 337, Simpson to Rev. William Mason, June, 1853. H.B.C.A., D.4/92, fo. 46, Simpson to Committee, July 10, 1828. In the M.M.S.A.



Norway House and Lac La Pluie were agricultural missions envisaged. The Simpson-Rundle letters exchanged in 1840 would seem to indicate that the latter was to itinerate, his circuit to include Fort Edmonton, Carlton, Fort Pitt, and Fort Assiniboine. Intercourse with the Indians was to be solely religious.⁴²

Riddell offers a different reason for the location of the missions at these four posts--geographic. He states that

not only in the selection of men, but also in the selection of places in which to begin and prosecute the missionary work, did the authorities show wise, discriminating judgement. The points at which the new commissioners were located were, in the finest sense of the word strategic. They were sent to places where the far extending trade routes converged to one central point and from which excursions could be made readily to the scattered camps of the Indians.⁴³

The strategic location of the missions may well have been important in their later spread, but there is no indication in the Company's archives that this was the intention.

That control of the Wesleyans was the Company's desire is further indicated by the regulations concerning travel and accommodation. Although the salaries of the

letter Simpson states that the Society could not claim all the credit for civilizing the native for the Company had already been active. This is substantiated in the H.B.C.A. reference.

⁴²Ibid., D.4/59, fos, 14-15, Simpson, Memoranda for the information of Mr. Rowand respecting the Wesleyan Mission in the Saskatchewan district, July 26, 1841 and D.5/6, fo. 287, Rundle to Simpson, Sept. 16, 1841.

⁴³Riddell, op. cit., p. 8.

Wesleyans were to be paid by their Society the Committee decided that the missionaries and their families were to be

boarded, lodged and conveyed from place to place in Craft belonging to the Company free of expense to the Society and that other facilities be afforded them for successfully conducting their spiritual labours. Such of those Gentlemen as may be single will have to be provided with a comfortable sitting room and bedroom within the Fort and take their meals or board with the Gentlemen in charge of the different Establishments at the public mess Tables; and for such as may be accompanied by their families a comfortable small house must be provided in which the missionary and his family will lodge and board apart from the public mess.⁴⁴

This intimate association, ostensibly springing from philanthropic motives, would appear to be in reality an excellent opportunity to prevent the missionary from interfering with the Company's affairs.⁴⁵

The entire scheme was a disastrous failure. Its only value was that it put an end to the migrations to Red River.⁴⁶ Animosity between the Wesleyans, who proved much less pliable than first thought, and the Company resulted in an almost complete collapse of the former's activity in the Prairie West and the return of the Church Missionary

⁴⁴H.B.C.A., D.5/15, fo. 36, Committee to Simpson, March 4, 1840.

⁴⁵The conclusion that the Company's assistance sprang from generosity has been the most popular amongst historians. See for example John MacLean, Vanguards of Canada (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1918), pp. 37-38; Riddell, op. cit., pp. 24-26; Alexander Begg, History of the North-West (Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co., 1894), I, p. 284; and Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71, p. 810n.

⁴⁶H.B.C.A., D.4/62, fo. 16, Committee to Simpson, June 21, 1843.

Society to Simpson's favor.

Almost immediately upon his arrival Evans, the superintendant of the Wesleyan missions, as well as subordinates like Rundle proceeded to alienate the fur trade interests. It was Evans's opposition to Sunday travel that sparked the initial controversy. Since the Indians at Norway House formed a significant portion of the York brigades, Simpson was convinced this would impede the function of a transportation network already seriously limited by environment.⁴⁷ Evans also cut the trapping season by two months by holding sacraments in December, November and March instead of the usual Spring and Fall.⁴⁸ Furthermore the parson envisaged the introduction of manufacturing at Norway House which would draw even more Indians from the trade⁴⁹ and made statements implying that the Indians should trade with whomsoever they pleased.⁵⁰

Rundle generally proved more circumspect especially after a severe reprimand from Simpson. The Wesleyan had expressed to Rowand, the Chief Factor, his dissatisfaction with the custom of shutting the gates when the Crees visited Fort Edmonton. The Governor tersely replied that

⁴⁷Ibid., D.5/7, fos. 197-198, Ross to Simpson, Aug. 12, 1842.

⁴⁸Ibid., D.5/6, fo. 343d., Ross to Simpson, March 8, 1846.

⁴⁹Ibid., D.4/67, fo. 49, Simpson to Evans, June 11, 1845.

⁵⁰Ibid., A.12/2, fo. 543, Simpson to Committee, June

on this subject Mr. Rundle from his inexperience is incompetent to give a sound opinion or advice, Mr. Rowand is therefore to exercise his own judgement on all matters connected with his management and in no shape be influenced by any other opinion or advice.⁵¹

As important in creating friction with the Company's gentlemen was the supercilious conduct of the missionaries and more often that of their wives. Nan Shipley's The James Evans Story⁵² provides a vigorous and colorful if less-than-academic sketch of the incompatibility of Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Ross and their daughters. Less publicity has been given Rev. George Barnley at Moose. While all appeared satisfactory upon arrival, after his marriage to an "English lady" the atmosphere deteriorated. The trifle which eventually "drove" the two back to England centred on Chief Factor Miles's refusal to permit Mrs. Barnley use of the officer's mess for her tea parties.⁵³ Ill feelings easily arose over discrepancies in rations, or such peccadilloes as Mrs. Evans's pilfering from the Oxford House garden.⁵⁴

These incidents are illustrative of the restrictive

20, 1845.

⁵¹Ibid., D.4/59, fo. 15, Memoranda for . . . Mr. Rowand . . . , July 26, 1841.

⁵²N. Shipley, The James Evans Story (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1966).

⁵³H.B.C.A., A.12/4, fo. 83, Simpson to Committee, March 25, 1848.

⁵⁴Letitia Hargrave, The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, Edited by M. A. Macleod, The Champlain Society, No. 28 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1947), Hargrave to Mrs.

environment of fur trade social life. The wives of the missionaries had more often than not more education and sported more of the social graces than the resident fur trader's wife. When the former usurped the latter's status only friction could result.

Donald Ross, more aware than most that this problem was precipitated by the proximity of the missionaries to the posts, pleaded with Simpson to make some arrangement to place the missionaries at a distance and to release the Company from the obligation of filling their "kettles." By 1843 Ross found the atmosphere at Norway House unbearable.

I believe I do not deceive myself or others when I say that I can stand as much annoyance of any description as most people but human forbearance has its limits and I cannot be answerable for the consequences and more over they will have many others to deal with besides myself.⁵⁵

Letitia Hargrave, the wife of York's Chief Factor and an incorrigible gossip, was of the opinion that perhaps it was Mrs. Ross rather than Evans who made Donald's life unbearable. "Mrs. Evans and her daughters' successful rivalry . . . [with] their finery and exhibition of good education and knowledge of astronomy" vexed the good Mrs. Ross who, Letitia was certain, "did not know the names of the commonest stars."⁵⁶ Whatever the cause Simpson thought

Dugald MacTavish, May 14-16, 1842, p. 133.

⁵⁵H.B.C.A., D. 5/8, fo. 445, Ross to Simpson, Aug. 7, 1843.

⁵⁶Hargrave, op. cit., Hargrave to MacTavish, Sept. 9, 1843, p. 150.

it best that Evans move to the Rossville Indian village on Little Playgreen Island two miles from Norway House.⁵⁷

This suggestion along with an unsuccessful request that the London Committee replace board, lodgings and travel assistance with monetary grants were the basis of Simpson's solution.⁵⁸ The final action was probably the only feasible one--a request, almost immediately granted, that the Secretary of the Society, Dr. Alder, recall Evans.⁵⁹ Although the recall is usually attributed to "the strike in the Wesleyan's harem"⁶⁰--Letitia's reference to the eager confessions of Margaret Sinclair, Eliza MisKeicunib, and Ann Sapat to alleged indiscreet conduct on the parson's part⁶¹--Simpson had secured the recall prior to hearing any whispers of the scandal.⁶²

⁵⁷H.B.C.A., D.5/29, fo. 9, Simpson to Evans, June 29, 1843.

⁵⁸Ibid., D.5/17, fo. 560, Committee to Simpson, April 3, 1846.

⁵⁹Ibid., D.4/32, fo. 7, Simpson to Ross, Dec. 2, 1844.

⁶⁰Hargrave, op. cit., Hargrave to James Hargrave, March 16, 1846, p. 219.

⁶¹Egerton R. Young, The Apostle of the North (Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1899), p. 254, implies that Simpson fabricated the scandal. Shipley, op. cit., pp. 181-216, absolves Simpson and finds a new villain in Rev. William Mason.

⁶²Although it was in January 1846 that the "reports of a very painful nature" came to Ross, H.B.C.A., D.5/17, fo. 75, Ross to Simpson, April 5, 1846 is the first letter in Simpson's correspondence relative to the matter. A.12/2, fo. 86, Simpson to Committee, June 18, 1846 would seem to indicate that neither he nor the Committee had heard of the matter before.

All it served was to erode further the Company's confidence in the Wesleyans. Evans then left under a dark cloud of painful gossip and Barnley over a tempest in a teapot. Only Rundle's retirement was surrounded by more auspicious circumstance, a broken arm. By 1848 of the white missionaries only Mason remained and he defected to the Church Missionary Society in 1854.

The repercussions of the Wesleyan difficulties would have been more marked in the history of Protestant agricultural missions had their accomplishments been more significant. The Lac La Pluie site was unsuccessful, Rundle had been laggard in founding a settlement at Pigeon Lake, and Mason was so despised by Evans that he found difficulty in asserting his views. Financial difficulties and political attacks never permitted the British Society to fill the vacancies⁶³ and in 1854 the field was turned over to what proved to be a more successful Upper Canadian Conference. As it was, the Fort Edmonton area struggled on without a missionary from 1848 to 1854. Left to Benjamin Sinclair the prospect of an agricultural settlement at Pigeon Lake vanished. The half-breed had the inclination but not the knowledge.⁶⁴ Moose was similarly abandoned and Norway House left to Mason. Had Mason been as

⁶³Ibid., D.4/41, fo. 64, Simpson to Alder, April 15, 1850.

⁶⁴M.M.S.A., Box 16, Letter 144, Sinclair to Mason, Eggmoon 10, 1849.

obnoxious as Evans every indication exists that Simpson would have planned its dispersal.⁶⁵ Till the assumption of the Wesleyan work by Upper Canada his efforts provide the only basis for laudatory comment.

If in 1840 impetus for expansion came from the Company, after 1849 it came from the Church of England. The Company was indeed opposed to any new missions for not only were the free traders using them as rendezvous but the buffalo were disappearing from the plains. Every new establishment strained the provisioning system closer to its breaking point. Restriction on the Company's part had however to be extremely circumspect. From the late 1840's onward the Company was under constant surveillance by Parliament and any great scandal could have caused revocation of its charter. The result was a virtually uncontrolled expansion of the missions and by 1870 the defeat of the Company.

Anglican expansion was the consequence of the creation of the Bishopric of Rupert's Land, anti-Catholicism and missionary zeal. The Bishopric had been created in 1849 largely because of the efforts of the Bishop of Montreal, George Jehoshaphat Mountain, after his visit to Red River in 1844.⁶⁶ Simpson was initially less than

⁶⁵H.B.C.A., D.4/35, fo. 34, Simpson to the Chief Factors and Chief Traders of the Northern Department, July 15, 1846.

⁶⁶G. J. Mountain, The Journal of the Bishop of Montreal (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845).

enthusiastic for the presence of a bishop implied greater freedom for the Anglicans. It would be much more difficult to dispose of a prestigious Church of England Bishop than a Wesleyan superintendant. But with the Wesleyan inability to continue their existing missions and the London Committee's consent⁶⁷ he could do little but offer his support.⁶⁸

After the appointment of David Anderson as the first Bishop, Simpson⁶⁹ and the Committee completely abandoned the Wesleyans. Since the Committee

had taken an active part in obtaining the creation of Rupert's Land into a diocese and the appointment thereto of a Bishop of the Church of England, they felt bound to give the weight of their influence to the missions of that church.⁷⁰

When the Wesleyans were granted permission in 1854 to assume their former stations it was only upon condition of

⁶⁷Boon, op. cit., pp. 57-59.

⁶⁸H.B.C.A., A.6/28, fo. 115, Committee to Simpson, March 25, 1850, orders the Governor to permit Anglican occupation of Moose. In D.4/41, fo. 64, Simpson to Alder, April 15, 1850, he was still clinging to the hope that a Wesleyan could be placed there. Perhaps Simpson felt that with the dismissal of Evans and the possible transfer of the missions to the Canadian Conference they would still prove more pliable than the Anglicans.

⁶⁹Ibid., A.13/6, fo. 61d., Simpson to Committee, Jan. 3, 1851 is the first letter in the Company's archives indicating that Simpson had completely abandoned the Wesleyans for the Church of England. The letter to the Wesleyans terminating their connection is D.4/45, fo. 5, Simpson to Rev. Enoch Wood, April 12, 1852.

⁷⁰Ibid., D.4/43, fo. 75, Simpson to Eden Colville, May 1, 1851.

co-operation with the Anglican Bishop.⁷¹ More pliable than their British brethren the Canadian Wesleyans to 1870 never expanded beyond the Edmonton and Norway House regions and consequently did not enter to any great extent into post-1850 Company policy.

Simpson was correct in assuming that the Bishop could act with greater independence than the Wesleyans had ever done. With an assured stipend of seven hundred pounds a year, four hundred pounds from the Leith fund⁷² and three hundred pounds from the Company, and the creation of a corresponding committee, the impetus for expansion now came from Rupert's Land not London. There is every indication that the Company's three hundred pounds was secured under less than voluntary circumstances. Bishop Anderson assured the 1857 Inquiry that the Master of the Rolls, Lord Langdale, had ruled that the Leith inheritance be used for the creation of a Rupert's Land diocese only on condition that the Company provide an additional three hundred pounds.⁷³ What could the unwilling

⁷¹Ibid., A.12/7, fo. 114, Simpson to Committee, May 6, 1854.

⁷²James Leith, in charge of Cumberland House from 1822 to 1829, left half of his estate "for the purpose of establishing, propagating and extending the Christian Protestant Religion in and amongst the native aboriginal Indians in . . . Rupert's Land." Although filed for probate in 1838 litigation was initiated and continued until 1849 when by a decision of the Master of the Rolls the money was set apart for the endowment of a Bishopric in Rupert's Land. Boon, op. cit., p. 59.

⁷³Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. Report

Company do in light of the growing opposition to its monopoly but comply?

Any visions Simpson may have had of controlling the Bishop were soon dispelled. He wrote Eden Colville that he found "it almost useless attempting to give the Bishop any advice . . . as he goes rashly into any scheme however insane that is put into his head by Cockran" and that he should "be exceedingly glad to lose the latter gentleman . . . as he is very troublesome."⁷⁴ Cockran persuaded the Bishop to expand in every direction. By 1860 Lac La Ronge, Stanley, Portage La Prairie, Westbourne, Scanterbury, Qu'Appelle, Fort Pelly, Nepowewin, and White Dog had been added to the three settlements of 1849, St. Peter's, The Pas and Fairford.

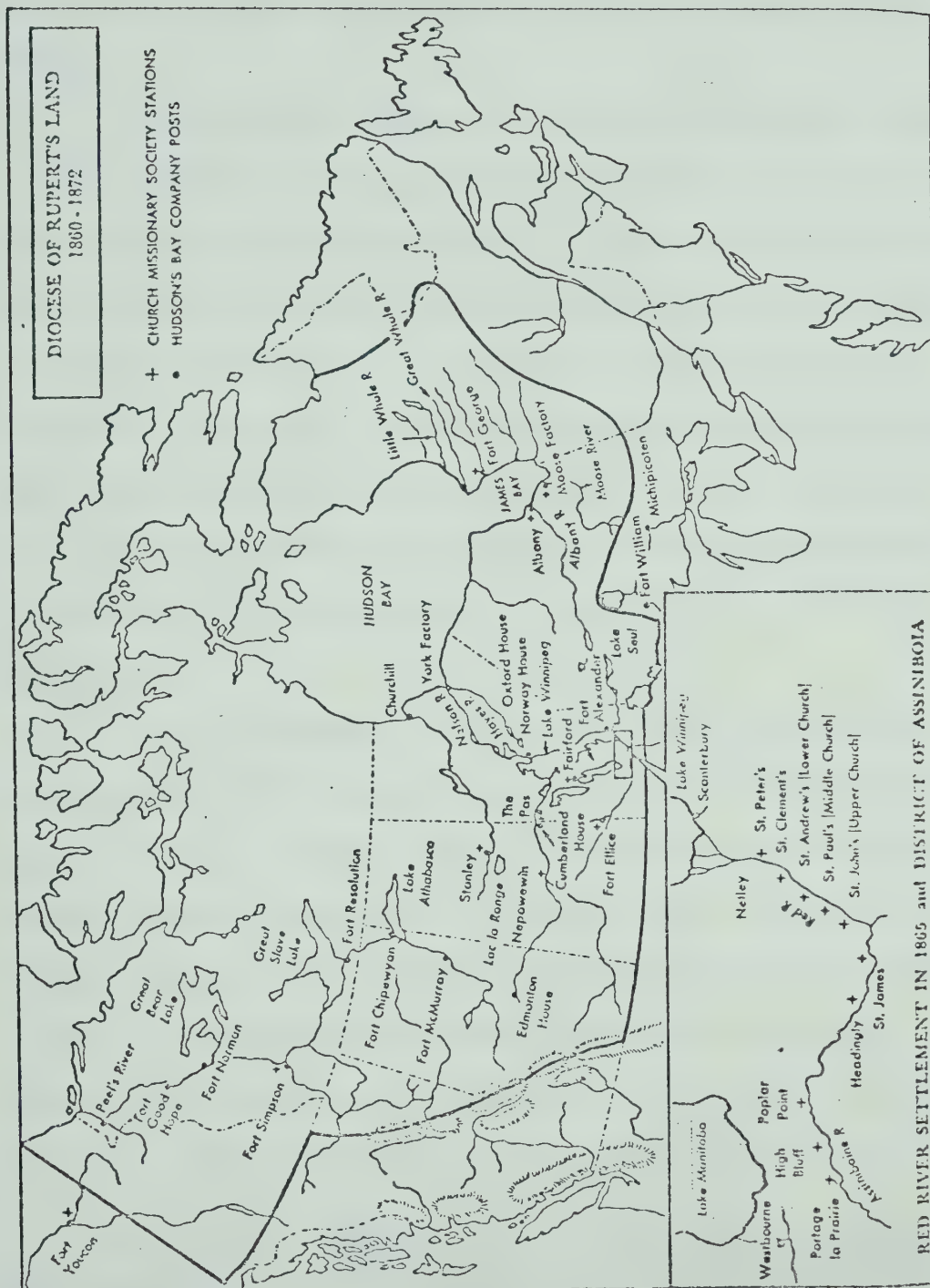
Popish competition was an ever constant stimulant to this movement from Red River. When for example Belcourt founded Baie des Canards on Lake Manitoba in 1841,⁷⁵ Cowley was sent to "wrangle with the Catholic"⁷⁶ and establish a counter mission at Partridge Crop." Sarah

from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company (London: 1857), p. 232. The less reliable J. J. Hargrave, Red River (Montreal: John Lovell, 1871), p. 110, indicates that the Company's gift was more voluntary than Anderson implies.

⁷⁴H.B.C.A., D.5/30, fo. 727, Simpson to Colville, May 22, 1851.

⁷⁵For the dispute as to the founding date see Morice, op. cit., p. 161.

⁷⁶Alexander Ross, The Red River Settlement (London: Smith, Elder, and Co.), p. 288.



Tucker's The Rainbow in the North,⁷⁷ a volume on Cockran's Indian Settlement, displays a hatred of "the poisonous pastures of popery" not atypical of the Rupert's Land clergy.

While intolerance was always to remain a factor as the Catholics and Anglicans moved side by side northward it would be wrong to discount the genuine and sincere motives of evangelical Christianity. This is evident in virtually every letter or journal in the Missionary Societies' archives. Salvation for the savage remained the most potent drive in the Anglican push from Red River--a motive that was often irrational and certainly not subject to the arguments or restraints of the Honorable Company.

For the Company to have employed the tactics of the 1840's to contain Anglican growth would have been lunacy. While in 1841 Simpson could order the Catholics and New England Baptists to disband their nascent communities at Fort William and effectively employ economic sanctions or order the Wesleyan's superintendant's dismissal, the political attacks on the Company in the 1850's no longer permitted such drastic measures.

⁷⁷S. Tucker, The Rainbow in the North (London: J. Nisbet and Co., 1851), p. 22. For further examples of the intense Protestant Catholic rivalry see H.B.C.A., D. 5/47, fos. 639-40, B. R. Ross to Simpson, Nov. 28, 1858; D.4/55, fo. 156, B. R. Ross to Simpson, June 15, 1859; and D.4/28, fo. 37, Alexander Christie to Simpson, May 12, 1863.

A. K. Isbister's petition to Earl Grey in 1847 started an investigation into the Company that culminated in the great 1857 Inquiry. The powerful Aborigines Protection Society⁷⁸ had also been applying pressure as early as 1836. Furthermore after Bishop Anderson enlisted, in addition to the Church Missionary Society, the assistance of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1850 and the Colonial and Continental Church Society in 1852 he had at his command their influence and presses to expose any Company obstruction. While the Company realized its delicate position it was not ready to completely abandon the West to the missionary and free trader.

As the American frontier advanced northwest in the 1840's and 1850's a viable alternate trade outlet developed for Red River. With the new market the mixed-bloods directed their energies towards the now profitable and illicit traffic in furs and liquor. The Company's attempt to stop the trade, culminating in the 1849 Sayer trial, failed. The Red River courts, under pressure from the mixed-bloods, could not enforce the Company's monopoly. While the Company may no longer have been willing to prosecute the mixed-bloods for illegal trading it continued to oppose their activities in the interior as well as in

⁷⁸Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements) (London: 1836), pp. 68-73. The witness for the Company was John Pelly.

Red River.

Since the missions were the only non-Company settlements they tended to become centers of this free trade activity. Originally Simpson had envisaged the missions as confined to the Indian altogether and excluding any country-born and/or retired servants. Both the latter were to settle at Red River where "they [would be] to some extent at least under the surveillance of the Company."⁷⁹ By 1850 however indications are that the country-born parishes of Red River were over populated.⁸⁰ The missionaries, especially Cockran, attempted to press the Company into allowing the country-born and retired servants to settle in their communities. Cowley had such a plan for Fairford,⁸¹ Mason for Norway House,⁸² and Woolsey for the Edmonton area. Woolsey in particular wanted retired tripmen as settlers. These plans the Governor refused to tolerate.⁸³

The whole problem of unauthorized settlements reached a head over the Fort Pelly, Fort Alexander and

⁷⁹H.B.C.A., A.6/29, fo. 167, Committee to Simpson, April 2, 1852.

⁸⁰W. L. Morton, Manitoba; A History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), pp. 90-91.

⁸¹H.B.C.A., D.5/30, fo. 727, Simpson to Colvile, May 22, 1851.

⁸²Ibid., D.5/34, fo. 173d., Barnston to Simpson, Aug 19, 1852.

⁸³Ibid., D.4/53, fo. 42, Simpson to Woolsey, June 29, 1857.

especially Portage La Prairie missions. In 1851 Cockran led a migration of settlers from St. Andrews and Middlechurch westward up the Assiniboine to La Prairie. Simpson was fearful that this

mission . . . near Red River . . . would very soon become difficult to manage as it would attract a large vagrant half-cast population who being too indolent to maintain themselves by agriculture would direct their attention to the fur trade and exert such an influence over the Indians as would tend to defeat the object in view.⁸⁴

In spite of Simpson's disgust at the "utter disregard of the views and wishes of the Company"⁸⁵ he was uncertain how to secure its dispersal without the use of force. In the end the matter was left with the Bishop. Simpson had been informed

that the settlers at Portage La Prairie were very much disposed to abandon the place but were prevented so doing by Mr. Cockran's personal influence.⁸⁶

Perhaps anxious to secure the Company's approval for the Fort Pelly and Fort Alexander missions Bishop Anderson removed Cockran to the Indian Settlement. Even with his absence however the mission continued to flourish and with the approval of the Fort Pelly and Fort Alexander missions the Company's position was further weakened. The missionaries now believed they could act with impunity.

⁸⁴Ibid., A.12/5, fo. 150, Simpson to Committee, June 26, 1850.

⁸⁵Ibid., A.12/7, fo. 460, Simpson to Committee, June 29, 1855.

⁸⁶Ibid., D.4/50, fo. 64, Simpson to Bishop Anderson, June 18, 1855.

An unsanctioned mission would in three or four years gain approval and if not would more than likely flourish. The inability to regulate the missions is further indicated by the fact that by 1870 the majority had substantial country-born populations.⁸⁷

The principal reason for requesting the Bishop not to found missions without the Company's consent in the Red River and Saskatchewan districts other than the desire to prevent free traders from affecting the fur trade profits was the inability of the Company's provisioning system to supply the missions as well as the Northern and Southern Departments. Missions rarely achieved self-sufficiency in their early years and tended to attract large numbers of Indians in the winter. The always munificent Company was the usual recourse when starvation inevitably presented itself. By 1850 with the decreasing numbers of buffalo the burden on the Company had become unbearable. From 1851 to 1853 alone the requests from the missions in the Northern Department doubled. Lac La Ronge alone, where Rev. Robert Hunt had a mania for cleanliness, consumed one sixth of the hard grease of both the Northern and Southern Departments for soap manufacture.⁸⁸ The unauthorized Fort Pelly mission nearly caused the starvation of both the catechist and the Company's

⁸⁷Butler, op. cit., p. 386.

⁸⁸H.B.C.A., D.5/37, fo. 616, Barnston to Simpson, Aug. 29, 1853.

servants.⁸⁹ The commissioned gentlemen were in a state of near panic.⁹⁰

Bernard R. Ross, in charge of Fort Simpson, believed that the Company should nevertheless continue to function as the chief supply agent for

if by the refusal of the Company to sell them what they require the Protestants were obliged to purchase Meat & Grease from the Natives the effect would be very bad as tending to open another market for the Indians; and one over which we could have no control; a proceeding which would seriously injure the provision returns of the District.⁹¹

Simpson and the Committee favored another approach although Ross was allowed to implement his suggestion. Missions were to be allowed only if they could provide for themselves without recourse to the Company. This was the stipulation for both Hunter's incursions into the Arctic and Gardiner's Churchill mission.⁹² The missionaries could stay at the posts at the Company's expense but only for short periods of time. In the Red River and Saskatchewan districts similar policies were initiated. Simpson increased the cost of supply from inventory to that charged

⁸⁹ Ibid., D.5/37, fo. 187, Alexander Christie to Simpson, May 31, 1853.

⁹⁰ Ibid., D.5/36, fo. 12, Rowand to Simpson, Nov. 4, 1853; and B.154/b/5, fo. 55, Barnston to Brooking, Sept. 8, 1856.

⁹¹ Ibid., A.12/10, fo. 196, B. R. Ross to Simpson, June 19, 1857.

⁹² Ibid., A.12/19, fo. 44, Simpson to Committee, Feb. 28, 1859; and D.5/49, fo. 99, Committee to Simpson, April 14, 1851.

outsiders.⁹³ He continued to plead with the Wesleyans and Anglicans to become self sufficient and to limit the number and size of their missions. Finally in 1864 the missionaries were placed entirely on their own. They were responsible for procuring as well as transporting their own provisions.⁹⁴ From this date onward, Simpson and his successors made little effort to regulate mission expansion or to admonish those who defied Company orders. The Company had in effect capitulated.

The predominant attitude among the commissioned gentlemen in the Company's service differed little from Simpson's. Their more famous feuds with the first group of Methodists have already been examined. Though the formation of an "Auxiliary Bible Society" at York in 1822 has often been construed as indicating the religious fervour of the commissioned gentlemen, the truth is probably far from this. It would appear that the Society's existence was due solely to the efforts of Rev. John West and Nicolas Garry, deputy governor of the Company 1822-1835.⁹⁵ There could be no other course but compliance. J. F. Klaus in his well researched article "The Early Missions of the Swan River District, 1821-1869" maintains that

⁹³Ibid., D.5/39, fo. 12, Hunter to Simpson, Jan. 9, 1854.

⁹⁴John McDougall, Saddle, Sled and Snowshoe (Toronto: William Briggs, 1896), p. 129.

⁹⁵N. Garry, "Diary of Nicolas Garry," Trans. of the Roy. Soc. of Can., 2d ser., VII, sec. 2 (1900), p. 194.

relations between the native missionaries, Rev. Settee and Charles Pratt, and the men of the Company were remarkably good. Settee refers to the officer in charge of Fort Pelly, Chief Trader Alexander Christie, as "our worthy friend" and "our benefactor" while he uses phrases of appreciation regarding his association with the McKays of Fort Ellice, McDonald of Fort Qu'Appelle, Taylor of Touchwood Hills Post and McKay and McBeath of Shoal River Post.⁹⁶

Klaus however bases his conclusions entirely on the Church Missionary Society Archives whose contents it must be remembered were meant for publication in the Church Missionary Society Gleaner or Church Missionary Intelligencer.

The journals of the posts near the missions, except controversial missions, e.g., Norway House, are almost totally devoid of any mention of the missionary except for regular Sunday and less regular weekday religious services. The difficulty for example with Charles Pratt's wife has already been mentioned. The close relationship between Chief Factor Hardisty's family and the McDougalls was nowhere repeated.

The preceding would appear to be a heavy indictment of the Company's activities. Simpson and the Committee were without a doubt consistently opposed to an extension of missions. Missionaries were introduced to preserve the status quo, to provide a measure of Christianity and with it law and Company rule, not to create a new civilized Northwest. Where A. K. Isbister, John McLean, and Egerton

⁹⁶J. F. Klaus, "The Early Missions of the Swan River District 1821-69," Saskatchewan History, XVII (1964), pp. 74-5.

Young as well as the Company's defenders such as Alexander Begg fail is that both place an over-emphasis on the Company as a determinant for either the success or failure of the missions. The first three believed that an evil Company stifled growth and the fourth that a philanthropic Company constantly induced it. Both are wrong. It is within the settlements themselves--the missionaries, the environment and the Indians--that one must search for the factors behind the many failures and few successes of the Protestant agricultural missions.

III. THE MISSIONARY

The missionary, while providing the very impetus for agricultural settlement also imposed the greatest number of restrictions on its development. Though agriculture played a significant role in Methodist, Anglican and Presbyterian plans for the spiritual and temporal uplift of the native, it was pursued with the greatest vigor by the Anglicans. In their firm conviction that "civilization must go hand in hand with Christianization"¹ agriculture was preached as fervently as the Gospel for without the former the latter would not take root. The Anglicans were however unable to change their idyllic conception of agriculture to suit the harsh environment of the Canadian West--to allow the union of the farm and the hunt. The Methodists and Presbyterians tended to the opposite--"Christ first to the heart, and then the after blessings of civilization and education."² In Edmonton's case it was some twenty years after. Most important every missionary irrespective of denomination

¹C.M.S.A., O, Smithurst, Journal, Oct. 21, 1842. For similar comments see O, James Hunter, Journal, April 9, 1846; O, Cowley to the Secretary, Nov. 1844; and M.5, Cockran to Venn, March 4, 1855.

²Young, op. cit., p. 144. See also McDougall, op. cit., pp. 143-44. For the general Methodist conception of this relationship see "Christianity and Civilization," The Christian Guardian, Nov. 26, 1856.

believed the Indian inferior, incapable of self government, of existence other than under the missionary's protection.

Although the first Anglican clergyman was in Rupert's Land as early as 1820 agriculture was not enthusiastically entered on until William Cockran proposed the Netley Creek Indian Settlement in 1829. His views and conceptions of the function of agriculture were of the utmost importance as they and their variations dominated all future plans for Anglican settlement.³

Initially agriculture was to play only a minor role in the evangelization of Rupert's Land. Benjamin Harrison,⁴ John West and George Simpson⁵ envisaged nothing as elaborate as a network of agricultural settlements. A school was to be established at Red River for the education of the Indian children and agriculture's only function was to recover the Indian youths from their "savage habits and

³In general the missionaries espoused a Christianity formed in the religious, humanitarian and middle class framework of Victorian England and Canada. For the purpose of this thesis however it will neither be necessary to expound on the values of Victorian society or on those the missionary tended to emphasize. Jean Usher, Duncan of Metlakatla, in The Shield of Achilles, ed. by W. L. Morton (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1966), pp. 287-291, provides an excellent analysis of the values of the Church Missionary Society in British Columbia and Foster, op. cit., pp. 10-29 of those of the early Anglicans at Red River. The values of the missionaries will become sufficiently clear in the examination of their plans for the propagation of the gospel.

⁴H.B.C.A., A.6/20, fo. 63, Harrison to West, Feb. 26, 1822.

⁵Ibid., D.4/88, fo. 82, Simpson to Committee, Aug. 4, 1825.

customs" and to reduce the expense of keeping the children to the Church Missionary Society.⁶ After the completion of their education they were to be returned to their relatives in the interior where it was hoped they would spread the Christian gospel.⁷

This early scheme never came to maturity and was completely abandoned in the late 1820's by both the Hudson's Bay Company and the Society.⁸ West's successor, the Rev. David Jones, was concerned about the fragility of the Indian boys' Christianity and convinced that

sending them [the Indian boys] to the wilderness at present, under the idea of propagating the gospel, would be indulging too sanguine an expectation⁹

He was at the same time at a loss as to their future.

They are growing up very fast, and I may indeed add, that the necessity of some step being taken will soon be pressing, in two or three years they will be in a state of adolescence, when if still uninfluenced by Divine Grace, the habits and disposition of the Indian will soon burst over the feeble barrier of the School-boy's restraint.¹⁰

His solution, in addition to continued support for agriculture at the school, involved instruction in other

⁶West, op. cit., p. 117.

⁷H.B.C.A., A.6/20, fo. 167-169, Harrison to Jones, March 12, 1824.

⁸Ibid., D.4/88, fo. 82, Simpson to Committee, Aug. 4, 1825.

⁹C.M.S.A., M.1, Jones to the Secretary, July 1827.

¹⁰Ibid.

trades such as rough carpentry and weaving.¹¹ At most however his ideas were very incomplete and his plans for the boys' future never more than a conviction that they would be absorbed into the Red River community or eventually even sent into the interior. Jones balked at any suggestion of an agricultural settlement for Indians which would at the same time absorb those boys too old for the school. In a letter to the Secretary of the Society he confessed that he feared that any interference with the natives "would bring on an unpleasant collision" with the Company.¹²

Cockran had no such fear and three years after his arrival he commenced a vigorous campaign for an agricultural mission.¹³ In an 1828 letter to the Secretary of the Society he condemned Jones's and West's former neglect of the Indian.

Our labours hitherto have been altogether confined to the Europeans, Half breeds, and Indian Women who were the Mothers of many of the Half breeds who have been brought from almost every post of the Company to live at Red River. We have not yet made a single step towards the civilization and evangelization of the pure adult Indian.¹⁴

In the same letter he offers the nucleus of the idea for

¹¹Ibid., M.1, Jones, Journal, May 2, 1825. See also M.1, Jones to D. Coates, July 20, 1824.

¹²Ibid., M.1, Jones to the Secretary, Feb. 10, 1829.

¹³Boon, op. cit., pp. 35-45 provides an adequate though brief biography of Cockran.

¹⁴C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 7, 1828.

most of the future Anglican attempts to evangelize the Indian. Cockran discarded the idea of itinerancy that the Methodists and Presbyterians were to seize, and which indeed the Company would have preferred. He thought it impossible to benefit the native

while they continue to depend upon the chase for a livelihood for the country of those Indians about Hudson's Bay is very much impoverished, a very few individuals can find subsistence together; therefore they wander in separate families from place to place, and seldom ever come together, and seldom continue many days in the same place. To preach the Gospel officially to them in their present state, would almost require a Missionary for every family. This can never be obtained.¹⁵

Equally ludicrous, Cockran was certain, would be a missionary at every fur post

for the Indians are seldom at the posts, they only go there when they are in want of clothing or ammunition and other necessary utensils and have furs to barter. It is not the wish of the chief factors, who are in charge of the Company's posts, to have the Indians often about them . . . for while the Indians continue at the posts they are a burden to the chief factors; they often live upon their scanty stock of provisions.¹⁶

Cockran was convinced that no method would be effective save "civilization." Indians must be gathered in self-sustaining Christian villages of five to six hundred totally dependent on agriculture.¹⁷ Hunting and tripping were to be abolished. Cockran realized the expense involved but assured the Secretary that he would begin on a "small scale" and expand as he found means of

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 11, 1828.

support.

Cockran saw the principal value of agriculture in its ability to inculcate habits of industry and economy. Barbarism was the very cause of indolence which in turn led to poverty, want and debt. Cockran, and indeed all missionaries irrespective of denomination, glorified work as the "greatest friend Piety has on earth."¹⁸ Not work in the ordinary sense or for its own sake, but Work for the Glory of God. Work established worldly comfort but more important it freed man from his struggle for survival and allowed him to contemplate the nature of his existence and his God.¹⁹ Idleness was the first step on the path to hell, a path Cockran was certain the Indian was well down.²⁰ He was firm in the belief that

if they [the Indians] become agriculturalists, they will be rational beings, whom we can reason with, who by proper attention will in the end be brought to steady habits, and will raise up respectable families. If they become hunters probably they will be forever lost.²¹

Henry George, whose ideas corresponded closely with those of Cockran, his father-in-law, roundly denounced

¹⁸Ibid., M.1, Cockran to Rev. E. Bickersteth, Aug. 3, 1829.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., M.1, Cockran, Journal, Dec. 5, 1832.

²¹Ibid., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, July 25, 1833. W. E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 242-62 contains an excellent discussion of the Protestant work ethic in

the hunt, certain that

the character and habits of the hunter [are] diametrically opposed to the right development of Gospel principle and practice. His habits are inseparable from prodigality, idleness and his never failing condition . . . that of beggary and extreme want.²²

There was equal opposition to tripping. Those Indians engaged in transporting supplies from York to Red River were in Cockran's opinion "the most base, unprincipled, immoral people that inhabit this continent."²³

Cockran's blueprint for the Indian Settlement proposed a blissful, idyllic and pastoral existence.

The Indians would

procure their livelihood in an honourable honest manner within the sound of the Gospel and the House of God, where their souls shall be fed with the bread of life, and where they shall be reminded of their duty to God, their neighbour and their own soul.²⁴

Since the Indian, deep in poverty and ignorance, would be unable to procure even the barest essentials to commence farming Cockran reasoned that the missionary, at least in the initial stages, would have to supply all. He intended to distribute not only the tools and seeds but even provide a man and two oxen to till a sufficient quantity of soil for the first crop. A modest house and root

its Victorian context.

²²C.M.S.A., M.6, George to the Secretary, Jan. 10, 1857. See also M.1, Cockran, Journal, May 24-26, 1827.

²³Ibid., Cockran to the Secretary, July 25, 1833.

²⁴Ibid., Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 11, 1828.

cellar and a fishing net were also to be supplied. Later when enough settlers had established themselves a grist mill would be built.²⁵ Clothing was essential and by 1861 Cockran concluded that

another article of economy and convenience is a bed. A man spends a fourth or one third of his time in this position. If a person throws himself down at night, on the ground or on a floor in the same apparel, which he wears in the day, it will not last more than half the time it would do if used in a proper manner. If the Capot is used for the day and the blanket for the night in their right order, both articles will last longer than if used promiscuously.²⁶

At the center of every village would be the mission farm and school. As well as providing the example of and opportunity for industry the farm was to supply the school and the settlers. After three years Cockran thought, rather optimistically, that the Indian would no longer look to the mission farm for support, that he would be self sufficient. Rather than having the mission farm continue to provide seed and charity, a public granary under the supervision of the Indian Chief, the Missionary and the miller was to be established. Every farmer would be forced to deposit a quantity of grain sufficient for next year's seed and to ward off famine.²⁷ No Indian would be allowed to join the settlement who did not intend to

²⁵Ibid., Cockran, Journal, Oct. 16, 1831. The entry for this day contains the lengthy proposal that Cockran appears to have followed with little modification for the next thirty years.

²⁶Ibid., M.6, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 5, 1861.

²⁷Ibid., O, Cockran, Journal, July 26, 1852.

farm or send his children to the mission school to be educated.²⁸

West's Indian school, which had continued to emphasize book learning, was to be converted into an Industrial School. The boys would be taught husbandry, carpentry and weaving: the girls, spinning, knitting, sewing, and milking. Cockran was particularly concerned about the Indian women.

They must be made to bear a part of the burden of life, for the increase of their virtue and the safety of their souls. They are dreadfully given to gossiping, whoring and lying: industry alone can recover them from their evil ways, and establish their minds in virtue.²⁹

The entire scheme was to cost the Society not more than twelve pounds to fifteen pounds for every Indian settled.³⁰

Cockran's plan for the Indian Settlement, and probably even more the settlement itself, became the model for agricultural missions throughout Rupert's Land. At the missions south of Nepowewin³¹ and Partridge Crop,³²

²⁸Ibid., M.1, Cockran, Journal, July 4, 1833.

²⁹Ibid., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, July 30, 1833.

³⁰Ibid., M.1, Cockran to Bickersteth, Aug. 3, 1829

³¹Ibid., O, Rev. Henry Budd to Major Straith, Aug. 1, 1859. Budd, the first ordained Indian, never possessed thoughts on agricultural settlement as complicated as Cockran's and his views can only be determined by implication.

³²Ibid., M.3, Cowley, Journal, Feb. 13, 1843. See also M.5, Rev. William Stagg to Venn, Jan. 29, 1855.

such as Westbourne,³³ Fort Pelly,³⁴ Fort Ellice,³⁵ Scanterbury,³⁶ Portage La Prairie,³⁷ and Landsdowne³⁸ the model was pursued with the greatest vigor and conviction though allowances must be made for Fort Pelly. Charles Pratt, the native catechist, and more especially his wife, would rather trap and trade and hunt buffalo than grub potatoes.³⁹

The further north the mission the graver the doubts about the practicability of agriculture. Hunter,⁴⁰

³³Ibid., M.6, George to Rev. J. Chapman, Feb. 5, 1860.

³⁴Ibid., M.5, Minutes of the Corresponding Committee, June 7, 1852. See also M.5, Rev. Charles Hillyer to Venn, Aug. 3, 1853. This is the only mission where an alternative to the agricultural settlement was proposed. Pratt and Hillyer were to travel with the Indian camps. As the first winter approached however Hillyer considered himself too frail and by spring had commenced a settlement.

³⁵S.P.G.A., E.8, Document 4895, Thomas Cook, Journal, Oct. 1, 1863.

³⁶C.M.S.A., O, Settee, Journal, Sept. 24, 1867.

³⁷Ibid., O, Thomas Cockran to Straith, Jan. 15, 1854.

³⁸Ibid., O, Rev. Robert Phair, Journal, July 8, 1864.

³⁹H.B.C.A., D.4/46, fo. 80, Simpson to Bishop Anderson, June 30, 1853.

⁴⁰C.M.S.A., O, Hunter, Journal, Sept. 26, 1844. Though the Rev. James Hunter, and the native Rev. Henry Budd were not the only missionaries ever stationed at Devon Mission, their views predominated. The same can be said of Rev. Robert Hunt and his native assistant Rev. James Settee.

and Budd⁴¹ at Devon as well as Hunt⁴² and Settee⁴³ at English River and Lac La Ronge seriously doubted the capability of the soil and climate to provide sufficient for either white or red man. Hunter for one was most aware of the difficulties the missionary created. For example while the Indian children were learning to read they were

losing the opportunity of becoming sufficiently dexterous at hunting to be able to depend upon it for support.⁴⁴

It was also realized that any gathering of Indians for a prolonged period would soon exhaust the wild life.⁴⁵ Yet all four were adamant that continued access to the Indian's mind and civilization were essential for any firm conversion to Christianity.⁴⁶ They admitted, though most reluctantly for they were in agreement with Cockran's and George's condemnation of the hunt, that it and tripping were necessary to subsidize the efforts of the plow.⁴⁷ Fishing was however regarded with much greater favor for it at least

⁴¹Ibid., M.6, Budd to the Secretary, Aug. 1, 1856.

⁴²Ibid., M.5, Hunt to the Secretary, May 30, 1850.

⁴³Ibid., M.5, Settee to the Secretary, July 19, 1852.

⁴⁴Ibid., O, Hunt Journal, n.d. (probably Nov. 1852).

⁴⁵Ibid., O, Budd, Journal, May 29, 1851.

⁴⁶Ibid., M.5, Budd to the Secretary, Jan. 13, 1853; O, Hunt, Journal, April 15, 1852; O, Hunter, Journal, April 8, 1845; and O, Settee, Journal, Sept. 7, 1854.

⁴⁷Ibid., O, Hunter, Journal, April 9, 1846.

allowed the Indian to remain in one location.⁴⁸ Hunt even proposed to increase fish production by "depositing the ova of white fish and sturgeon" into the lake.⁴⁹ The ultimate goal was however as idyllic as Cockran's--civilized and Christian villages dependent on the plow, the net and if necessary the hunt, and like Cockran they never stinted the assistance needed to achieve this goal.

Only one missionary, John Smithurst showed any spirited opposition to Cockran's scheme.⁵⁰ For the most part, his twelve years in Rupert's Land (1839-1851) were spent at the Indian Settlement. Smithurst was most definite in support of the hunt, and thought it quite reasonable that it play an equal part with the farm.

It may be thought by some that hunting has a demoralizing effect upon the Indians. I by no means think so, provided they are not supplied with rum to take with them. I had much rather that they were away hunting than employed among the European and Half Breed Settlers, where they would be exposed to the temptations of beer [and] rum.⁵¹

⁴⁸Ibid., O, Hunt, Annual Report, 1853.

⁴⁹Ibid., O, Hunt, Journal, June 13, 1857.

⁵⁰David T. Jones had received Cockran's proposal with ill grace complaining that the work of the farmer was beneath the dignity of the clergyman and that more important his project invited financial disaster. His objections were however never more than feeble and easily squashed. Jones's opposition is suggested in Ibid., M.1, Cockran to Bickersteth, Aug. 3, 1829.

⁵¹Ibid., Smithurst, Annual Report, Aug. 1, 1846.

Smithurst, overlooking the role of the Indian women in the hunt, reasoned that with the women and children taking care of the farms the hunters would be at an advantage.

Their movements are not retarded by a train of women and children and they are moreover not compelled to turn back upon every little failure as is the case with those who have nothing to depend upon for food but the animals that are caught. If the hunt be unsuccessful for a few days, starvation drives the heathen Indians to some fishing place; not however with the Christian Indians who have generally with them flour sufficient for a fortnights provision and need not of animals caught in hunting.⁵²

Smithurst's second criticism was even harsher and if followed would have spelled a complete reversal of Anglican policy to correspond more closely with that of the Methodists. Smithurst condemned Cockran for concerning himself

too much with the temporal wants of his people as if civilization was a primary and evangelization a secondary object.⁵³

Smithurst viewed the objects in reverse. He felt that most of the difficulties at the Indian Settlement arose from the natives not "realizing all the dreams held out to them as to the advantages of civilization." Smithurst advocated a minimum of assistance. In this bitter journal entry he went as far as to suggest that the Indian should not even alter his "mode of life" and that his temporal affairs were his own concern.⁵⁴

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., M.4, Smithurst, Journal, July 8, 1847.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Smithurst was however unprepared to do more than indicate his dissatisfaction with Cockran to the Secretaries.⁵⁵ In fact there was little deviation from Cockran's blueprint. Smithurst except for approval of the hunt believed civilization and Christianity inseparable⁵⁶ and was as industrious as any other in assisting the Indian to settle, providing cows, grain and agricultural tools.⁵⁷ In contrast to Cockran, he was also firm in the belief that the Indian must work for all assistance except in cases of "old age or sickness."⁵⁸ Smithurst's outburst was probably due to the fact that the Indians at the Settlement had refused to fence their graveyard in 1846 while those at Norway House had done so willingly. He reasoned that the cause must be Cockran's unrestricted charity.⁵⁹

Till now little mention has been made of the Church Missionary Society and the role it played in the

⁵⁵All of the journals and letters were sent to the Church Missionary Society in London where they were edited and excerpts chosen for publication. Foster, op. cit., p. 40.

⁵⁶C.M.S.A., O, Smithurst, Journal, Oct. 21, 1842. Here Smithurst states that "every missionary who comes to preach to savages must . . . be prepared to teach not only the gospel but also agriculture."

⁵⁷Ibid., M.3, Smithurst, Annual Report, Aug. 1843.

⁵⁸P.A.C., Smithurst Papers, M.G. 19, E.6, vol. 2, Smithurst, Journal, Sept. 7, 1840. Hereafter cited as Smithurst Papers.

⁵⁹C.M.S.A., M.4, Smithurst, Journal, July 8, 1847.

plans for agricultural settlement. Other than providing the funds,⁶⁰ spiritual comfort,⁶¹ and continually cautioning its missionaries to avoid conflict with the Company⁶² its role at least to 1851 was negligible. The Society's policy was one of "individualism" and "paternalism." The missionary's primary duty was to bring the native into the "external Church," to gather individual souls for which he would be both "father and mother."⁶³ This is quite evident in Cockran's relations with the Indian boys at West's school.

They are perfectly satisfied with us. They look up to us for the supply of all their wants, and consider us as their adopted parents, and every boy seems willing to reside with us.⁶⁴

By 1841 the Society had decided against "paternalism," primarily because it was financially impracticable. It was not however completely abandoned until 1851 when Henry Venn, Secretary of the Society from 1841 to 1872, enunciated a policy that was to prevail for the rest of the nineteenth century. His "Minute upon the Employment and Ordination

⁶⁰Foster, op. cit., p. 41.

⁶¹C.M.S.A., L.2, ? to Cowley, March 29, 1847. The outgoing correspondence, the L series, is almost totally illegible and it is virtually impossible to determine the Society's attitude to Rupert's Land. The policy that Stock, op. cit., outlines for the Society's missions in general can be assumed to have applied to the Canadian West.

⁶²C.M.S.A., L.1, ? to Cockran and Jones, Feb. 26, 1833.

⁶³Stock, op. cit., II, p. 414.

⁶⁴C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, July 30, 1827.

of Native Teachers" regarded the ultimate object of a Mission

to be the settlement of a Native Church under Native Pastors upon a self-supporting system, it would be born in mind that the progress of a Mission mainly depends upon the training up and the location of Native Pastors; and that, as it has been happily expressed, the "euthanasia of a Mission" takes place when a Missionary, surrounded by well-trained Native congregations under Native Pastors, is able to resign all pastoral work into their hands, and gradually relax his superintendence over the pastors themselves, till it insensibly ceases; and so the Mission passes into a settled Christian community. Then the missionary and all missionary agency should be transferred to the "regions beyond."⁶⁵

The ultimate goal was "self support, self government and self extension."⁶⁶ That this should be the ultimate goal the missionaries all agreed, but not all whether it was indeed possible.⁶⁷

Theoretically this goal combined with Cockran's agricultural missions should have provided a base from which at least some Indians could have achieved some sort of independent existence, readied themselves for the inevitable white immigration that followed the surrender of Rupert's Land to Canada and escaped the reservation.

The goal was never realized. The missionaries were never convinced of the Indian's ability to govern himself; there was a prevailing belief in his inferiority.

⁶⁵Knight, op. cit., p. 307.

⁶⁶Usher, op. cit., p. 243.

⁶⁷C.M.S.A., M.5, Bishop Anderson to Venn, June 25, 1852.

Though most saw the principal causes of the Indian's short comings as barbarism, paganism, and the accompanying indolence and poverty few believed the Indian more than inferior.⁶⁸ Cockran makes it quite clear that "the Dominant Race of this Continent are the English," the inferior the "aborigines," and that the latter could never be more than such.⁶⁹

In whatever light you contemplate the Indian on earth, you behold him destined to suffer a large amount of misery. In his heathen erratick state, he is ignorant, brutish, vicious and miserable; with a gloomy future of everlasting separation from God, the source of all good before him. In a Christian and civilized state, though his condition is ameliorated, he still continues poor, sickly and miserable. It is only when you view him as heir of immortality, that you are cheered, with his prospects under the gospel.⁷⁰

All the white missionaries stressed Cockran's sentiments though little can be determined about Budd's, Settee's, Cook's or Pratt's thoughts except that they despised their fellows in the barbaric state.⁷¹

The Indian was regarded as extremely susceptible

⁶⁸The most common adjectival condemnations of the Indian found in the C.M.S.A. were "immoral, capricious, intractable, ignorant, indolent, callous, prideful, wayward, extravagant, ingracious, improvident, erratic, miserable, brutish, vicious and careless."

⁶⁹Ibid., M.6, Cockran, Journal, Aug. 5, 1861.

⁷⁰Ibid., M.4, Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 1, 1849.

⁷¹See for example Ibid., M.5, Budd to the Secretary, Jan. 13, 1853. He refers to the Plains Cree as "truly heathen and truly barbarous." It is often difficult from the native clergy's letters or journals to determine their race. Both Pratt and Cook were English half-breeds.

to the evils of European society, and even the native clergy admitted this.⁷² The Rev. W. C. Bompas's comments to the Bishop of Rupert's Land would have won wide agreement.

The Indians appear to lose their ancient hardihood . . . by contact with Europeans. They acquire European diseases of a very fatal character . . . habits of smoking and alas . . . the savage too often becomes effeminate and degraded and soon falls prey to . . . the deadly curse the firewater or rum.⁷³

The Indian it was felt must be kept away from the degenerate half-breed and corrupt European.

These beliefs in the Indian's inferiority and susceptibility to vice contained the germ of the idea for the reserve system and also increased the Indian's dependence on the missionary. The very idea of a native settlement contained in Venn's "Minute" implied a reserve. Certainly Cockran had no doubts that St. Peter's parish, the Indian Settlement, was a reserve and referred to it as such.⁷⁴ Cowley, in charge of the Settlement in 1862, was of the same opinion. When pressure was placed on the Indians to sell some of the land between Netley Creek and Sugar Point to allow expansion of the overpopulated St. Andrew's, Cowley pleaded that the government be so paternal as to respect the reserve and that the Indians be

⁷²Ibid., O, Budd, Annual Report, Aug. 12, 1869.

⁷³Ibid., M.7, Bompas to Anderson, Dec. 14, 1867.

⁷⁴Ibid., O, Cockran to the Secretary, n.d. (received by the Society Oct. 20, 1832).

regarded as minors and therefore unable to negotiate the sale of their farms.⁷⁵ There is no indication however that the interior missions were "reserves" for they were never referred to as such nor specifically set aside as at Red River. But then there was no need since the Indians were for the most part the only beings permitted, willing and available to settle elsewhere than Red River at least until the mixed-bloods migrated to the interior in the late 1860's.

The belief in the Indian's inferiority also cemented the Indian to a continued state of dependence. Instead of realizing the limitations that the environment imposed, too often the missionary blamed all failure on the Indian's barbaric and heathen condition.⁷⁶ The result was a constant exhortation to greater diligence to attain the elusive goal. Since the environment in fact dictated continued failure so it dictated continued charity. This is not to deny the settlements any success, for they did assist in preserving order in Rupert's Land and in most cases gave the Indian an opportunity for more than mere subsistence.

The Methodists and Presbyterians were much less

⁷⁵Ibid., Cowley, Annual Report, Jan. 31, 1862. The whites of Red River approved of the reserve status for they were convinced that "the mingling of whites and Indians has always proved, even in the Colony, a matter of very questionable propriety" Nor'Wester, Oct. 9, 1862.

⁷⁶This belief is prevalent in all missionary journals.

successful in their attempts to establish agricultural settlements, not because they opposed them but rather because of their peculiar view of the relationship of Christianity and civilization. Their position was clearly stated in the "Christian Guardian" in an article by a Dr. Beecham.

I regard Christianity as the parent of civilization and am persuaded that true civilization cannot be produced without it; I say true civilization because I am aware that a certain kind of civilization may exist unconnected with Christianity [though] . . . I cannot conclude that the civilization of the classic Heathen was anything better than a splendid barbarism.

Having adduced evidence furnished by the experience of our own Society, with which that of other Missionary Societies will, I doubt not, be found to concur, in support of the conclusion that wherever the Gospel is introduced civilization invariably follows I would observe . . . that the circumstances of our always finding civilization following in the train of the Gospel, is of itself, a presumption that Christianity has something to do with originating it; but I think on examining the subject I can perceive something between the two like the relation of cause and effect. No sooner does the Gospel begin to operate upon the mind of the Heathen than it leads to the first step in civilization. It is shortly seen to be indecorous and improper for persons to meet together in a state of filthiness and comparative nudity in the public worship of Almighty God. The people themselves are soon made to feel, under the teaching of the Missionaries, that a more decent exterior is necessary; and thus the first step is taken in civilization and clothing is introduced. As the next step the Gospel induces a settled course of life, and tends to promote industry. The people having become desirous to hear the Gospel preached find it necessary to renounce their wandering life, and to have a settled abode, in order that they may enjoy the regular ordinances of religion . . . Having changed their mode of life so far as to take up a settled abode, industry becomes necessary for them to maintain themselves; they are no longer dependent upon the chase; and industrious habits are consequently formed.⁷⁷

⁷⁷Dr. Beecham, "Christianity and Civilization,"

This conviction that Christianity must come before civilization⁷⁸ placed a heavy emphasis on itineracy rather than settlement as the principal technique for evangelization in the initial contact with the Indian. As Christianity took effect it would be supplemented and eventually superseded by settlement.⁷⁹

Itineracy was never as popular in the Norway House as in the Fort Edmonton area. Except for Evans's travels to points as distant as Dunvegan and Lesser Slave Lake all attention was devoted to the development of the Rossville and Jackson's Bay Missions. Several reasons can be offered for this discrepancy. First, the Plains Cree of Western Rupert's Land with the relatively independent and satisfactory life the buffalo permitted were unwilling to settle without a great deal of persuasion.⁸⁰ Conversely, the Saulteaux and Swampy Cree of the Lake Winnipeg region were in such wretched and pitiable condition that by 1840

Christian Guardian, Nov. 26, 1856. Since the Methodists and Presbyterians had essentially similar plans they will be treated together.

⁷⁸John McDougall, In the Days of the Red River Rebellion (Toronto: William Briggs, 1903), p. 71.

⁷⁹H.B.C.A., D.4/29, fo. 9, Evans to Simpson, June 29, 1843. See also D.5/8, fo. 370, Evans to Simpson, July 28, 1843; "Hudson's Bay Missions," Missionary Society Reports of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1857, p. xviii (hereafter cited as Methodist Reports); "Norway House," Wesleyan Missionary Notices, May 1854, p. 38 (hereafter cited as Wesleyan Notices).

⁸⁰"Letter from the Rev. G. McDougall, Chairman of the District, dated Victoria, January 9th, 1870," ibid., May 1870, p. 100.

little persuasion was necessary.⁸¹ Secondly as Rundle⁸² and later Woolsey⁸³ found when attempting a mission station at Pigeon Lake, it was impossible for a single missionary to itinerate effectively and also superintend a mission.⁸⁴ Thirdly, there had been an Indian settlement at Norway House since 1828⁸⁵ and this demanded so much of Evans's and his successors' time that "the circuit" had to be abandoned. Indeed it was only with the assistance of Rev. William Mason that Evans had been able to hunt souls further in the interior. Mason, Hurlburt, Brooking, Stringfellow,⁸⁶ and Steinhauer, all at one time stationed at either Jackson's Bay or Rossville, never undertook any duty other than that of resident missionary.

Only the Presbyterians had a serious and effective plan for a joint itinerant and agricultural mission and it

⁸¹"Extract of a Letter from the Rev. R. Brooking, dated Jackson's Bay, December 7th, 1855," ibid., Nov. 1856, p. 134.

⁸²M.M.S.A., Box 15, Letter 28, Rundle to the Secretary, Aug. 7, 1846.

⁸³Rev. Gerald M. Hutchinson, Memorial Booklet Written on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary Celebrations Honouring the Arrival of the Rev. Thomas Woolsey and the Rev. Henry Bird Steinhauer on Sept. 1855 (n.p., 1955), pp. 14-21.

⁸⁴P.A.M., Rev. James Nisbet Correspondence and Reports (1863-1869), Nisbet to Rev. R. F. Burns, Sept. 2, 1864, p. 12, (hereafter cited as Nisbet Correspondence).

⁸⁵Supra, p. 25n.

⁸⁶Stringfellow was at Jackson's Bay from 1857 to 1864 and at Rossville from 1864 to 1868. Biographical information on most Methodists can readily be found in

was the result of an uncertain compromise between Rev. James Nisbet and the Foreign Mission Committee of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada rather than of thoughtful planning. Initially the Committee did not even feel a mission warranted.⁸⁷ When Nisbet finally persuaded them of its importance they demanded an itinerant one, convinced as they were that Christianity must precede civilization and that the cost of an agricultural settlement, estimated at twenty-five hundred dollars, was excessive. Since neither the Committee nor Nisbet were willing to abdicate their position the result was an excessively costly and well staffed mission at Prince Albert with a "circuit" extending to Fort Carlton.⁸⁸

Though all missionaries contemplated the establishment of a settlement only Nisbet's general plan can be outlined in detail.⁸⁹ Nevertheless it can be assumed with

Riddell, op. cit.

⁸⁷P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, John Black to the Synod, April 7, 1864, pp. 6-8.

⁸⁸This difference of opinion between the Committee and Nisbet is nowhere openly revealed in the Nisbet Correspondence. Robert D. Dunning, A Century of Presbyterianism in Saskatchewan 1866-1966 (Prince Albert: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 1966), p. 13, a not altogether unhistorical effort, maintains that friction did exist and that serious criticisms were continually being levelled at the farming operations of the mission. This would tend to be supported by P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to the Rev. Wm. McLaren, July 6, 1869, p. 58.

⁸⁹M.M.S.A., Box 15, Letter 275, George Barnley to the Secretary, July 184?. This twelve page letter is an elaborate plan for the evangelization of the Indian

certainty that all would agree with Evans that the first function of any settlement should be

to afford the missionary greater facilities in instructing the rising generation . . . Education is well nigh out of the question where the natives retain all their wandering habits.⁹⁰

It was also believed that settlement would allow the resident teacher to acquire the "language;" and "acquaint himself with the peculiar manners, existing vices and reigning superstitions."⁹¹ Equally important settlement would provide the missionary with a home for his family, a provision base from which to dispense charity and a centre for his ministry.⁹² The further advanced the process of Christianization and settlement the more complex the schemes became. James Evans envisaged a manual training school at Rossville along the lines of Cockran's Industrial School⁹³ and Thomas Hurlburt, Superintendent of Missions (1854-1857), a training center for native agents.⁹⁴

Nisbet's blueprint for Prince Albert almost rivals that for Cockran's Indian Settlement in detail. Briefly

in Rupert's Land but is for the most part illegible.

⁹⁰Ibid., Box 14, Letter 258, Evans to Simpson, June 10, 1848.

⁹¹H.B.C.A., D.5/8, fo. 370, Evans to Simpson, July 28, 1843.

⁹²P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to Burns, Aug. 19, 1864, pp. 9-11.

⁹³H.B.C.A., D.4/32, fo. 117, Simpson to Evans, June 11, 1845.

⁹⁴"Norway House," Wesleyan Notices, May 1854, p. 38.

he proposed

endeavouring to collect as many children as possible, and have industrial schools for them--teaching them the ordinary branches of a common and christian education, but also training them to farming, cattle-keeping, carpenter work, and whatever other branches of industry may be found convenient. The girls would be taught house work, needle work, &c. I would bring children from any quarter, who may be willing to come to us. The expense of keeping and clothing them would not be great if once farming operations were fully established. I think there would be no difficulty in producing potatoes and milk enough, at all events; and, an occasional trip to the plains might furnish flesh meat till stock increases. The boys I would clothe in moose leather, and canvas garments, and the girls in print frocks. We should take them at as early an age as possible--orphans, and such children as have none to care for them, would be sought after, as we may be more certain of their being allowed to remain than others. We shall do all we can to induce and encourage Indian families to settle around us; but it is up-hill work--they are so wedded to their roving mode of life.⁹⁵

In its specific execution this plan and its variations called for at least two missionaries (one to itinerate), two men to build the mission station, one to operate the farm, an interpreter who would also act as school teacher and a medical doctor. "A sufficient stock of horses, cattle, dogs, and implements for working the land, building purposes and travelling" was also considered essential.⁹⁶ Most of the equipment and labour was for the mission school, the most important aspect of the mission. If the

⁹⁵"Rev. James Nisbet," The Home and Foreign Record of the Canada Presbyterian Church, 1866, VI, p. 73, (hereafter Presbyterian Record).

⁹⁶P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to Burns, Aug. 19, 1864, pp. 8-11.

adult Indian settled so much the better but assistance was to be rendered only "in cases of sickness and infirmity."⁹⁷

Agriculture played only a minor role in Methodist proposals for mission settlement especially in the 1840's, though it became progressively more important in the 1860's. The Methodists at Rossville and Jackson's Bay believed it

not possible to enter upon any systematic course of training with them [the Indians] as their climate . . . is too severe for them to depend much on the cultivation of the soil.⁹⁸

It was concluded that the Indian must therefore depend almost entirely on hunting and fishing for subsistence.

There was never any attempt to discourage the hunt; indeed every encouragement was given "to such extent as the country may allow."⁹⁹ The prevailing philosophy was that

if this [the hunt] is their [the Indian's] occupation the power of the Gospel cannot be other wise than beneficial by making them more industrious and more intent on the discharge of their debts and more conscientious in not contracting them without a probability of paying.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸"Missions at Norway House and Jackson's Bay," Nor'Wester, Sept. 28, 1860.

⁹⁹H.B.C.A., D.5/8, fo. 370, Evans to Simpson, July 28, 1843. See also M.M.S.A., Box 15, Letter 28, Rundle to the Secretary, Aug. 7, 1846.

¹⁰⁰H.B.C.A., D.5/17, fo. 279, Evans to Simpson, May 22, 1846.

Tripping and fishing were equally to be tolerated. Nisbet was similarly willing to allow the hunt though he hoped to eventually wean the Indian from it to agriculture.¹⁰¹ Agriculture was however still seen by all as a higher occupation, "one of the first lessons of Christianity,"¹⁰² for it more than any other activity and like Christianity encouraged industry, settlement and a greater number of the virtues considered indispensable to civilization.

Tolerance for the hunt continued but by 1860 the need for agriculture was seen as more urgent, especially by the Methodists. The Rossville fishery and buffalo near Victoria and Prince Albert were failing. Missionaries like George McDougall realized that

the day has arrived when the work must assume a different form [from the previous itineracy]; it must be consolidated, Churches must be erected and Schools established, and the hunter taught to till the soil. This is his [the Indian's] only hope. His present resources will soon be exhausted.¹⁰³

Even so no definite Methodist plan for encouraging agriculture emerged and at best only a vague pattern can be determined. The first step was always the construction

¹⁰¹P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to Burns, Aug. 19, 1864, p. 9.

¹⁰²McDougall, Saddle, Sled and Snowshoe, p. 120.

¹⁰³"Extracts of three letters from the Rev. George McDougall, Chairman of the Hudson's Bay District, the first dated On the Plains, Aug. 28, 1862," Christian Guardian, March 11, 1863. For opinions to the same effect see "White Fish Lake," Methodist Reports, 1860-61, p. xxvi; "Annual Report-Saskatchewan District," ibid., 1869-70, p. xviii; and "Letter from James Nisbet," Presbyterian Record, 1869, IX, p. 74.

of a mission station, ice house, dairy, store house and garden. Indians were encouraged to cultivate plots and seeds and tools provided but there is no indication that assistance was anywhere as systematic or bountiful as that received by their Anglican counterparts. It was rendered when required and asked but agriculture was never forced at the expense of the hunt.

While at a cursory glance the Methodist and Presbyterian plan, or lack of it in the former case, may appear successful, it was as much a failure as that of the Anglicans. The policy of itineracy especially in the prairies delayed the transition from a nomadic to a sedentary life. Even where settlement was effectively or at least persistently pursued as at Rossville and Prince Albert the means of survival hinged as will be seen in the following chapter almost entirely on the trip and hunt rather than on agriculture. As the fur trade inevitably retreated northward, the missions could only suffer. The Methodist and Presbyterian success was a success limited to the fur trade era of the nineteenth century.

Like the Anglicans both denominations thought the Indian a lower being, mentally inferior and incapable of survival without the beneficence of the missionary or the government.¹⁰⁴ The Indian must be protected from the

¹⁰⁴"Saskatchewan--Massacre of Crees by Blackfeet Indians, Near the Rocky Mountains," Wesleyan Notices,

"almost certain influx and settlement of thousands . . . with their vices and recklessness,¹⁰⁵ for if they were not, "trials and dangers--such as we have not seen may be our lot."¹⁰⁶ The end result could only be the one Nisbet proposed. He advocated that

proper reserves [be] made for them, strong measures taken to prevent the bringing of strong drink among them, and assistance given by the Government to such Indians as wish to settle on land--at least for the first few years.¹⁰⁷

May 1869, p. 55. For similar opinions see "Hudson's Bay," Methodist Reports, 1855, p. 11; "Extracts of a Letter from the Rev. Robert Brooking, dated Jackson's Bay Mission, Oxford Lake, December 4th, 1854," Wesleyan Notices, May 1855, p. 39; "Extracts from the Journal of the Rev. Thomas Hurlburt, Chairman," ibid., Feb. 1855, p. 85; and H.B.C.A., D.5/11, fo. 228, Evans to Simpson, May 16, 1844. It is difficult to determine the opinions of Indian missionaries like Henry Bird Steinhauer and Peter Jacobs or half-breed agents like Peter Erasmus and Benjamin Sinclair. Rev. Peter Jones, a native Methodist missionary in Upper Canada thought the Indian equal to the white man. He most firmly believed that the "treacherous Spaniards" and the whites who followed systematically "for paltry gain . . . impaired the minds, corrupted the morals, and ruined the constitutions of a once hardy and numerous race." This is argued in his History of the Ojebway Indians (London: A. W. Bennett, 1861), p. 29f.

¹⁰⁵"Hudson's Bay Missions," Methodist Reports, 1857, p. xxiv.

¹⁰⁶"From the Rev. John McDougall, dated Woodville Mission, Rocky Mountains, January 1869," Wesleyan Notices, May 1869, p. 42.

¹⁰⁷"Letter from James Nisbet," Presbyterian Record, 1869, IX, p. 75.

IV. THE SETTLEMENTS

No missionary achieved his ultimate goal of self sufficient and predominantly agricultural communities. The hazards of climate never permitted a satisfactory life based solely on agriculture. The result was a fusion of a new agricultural economy with the old hunting economy of the fur trade.¹ Existence even then was never more than precarious. Agriculture was always faltering, only in few cases spontaneous and always ancilliary to the uncertain hunt, net and trip. Calamities were recurrent and disintegration only avoided by the missionary's constant paternal assistance. This will become most apparent in the following descriptive analysis of the settlements' population and economy--the extent of the farms, technology, land holding, livestock and the role of the hunt.

While missionary charity was the principal cement holding the settlements together it did not determine either the geographical patterns of success or the physical patterns of growth. The population of the Indian settlements was relatively small, never totalling more than

¹This argument is adapted from W. L. Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River Colony," Canadian Historical Review, XXX (1949), pp. 305-321.



WESLEYAN MISSION PREMISES, JACKSON'S BAY

1856



WESLEYAN MISSION PREMISES, ROSSVILLE

1856

Ryerson, op. cit., pp. 88, 92.

twenty-five hundred.² The largest settlements, the Indian Settlement, Rossville, The Pas and Fairford, were all concentrated in the Lake Winnipeg area. By the late 1860's their respective populations were eight hundred,³ six hundred,⁴ six hundred,⁵ and three hundred.⁶ The other settlements ranged in size from White Fish Lake's one hundred forty,⁷ and Victoria's half dozen Indians and one hundred thirty country-born⁸ to Prince Albert's six or seven Indians.⁹

²This figure is derived from the estimated populations of the various settlements. Often nothing more than the number of houses or a population figure for a single year was available. The statistics were adjusted to apparent growth trends and are probably one or two hundred on the conservative side.

³P.A.C., M.G., E.9, Rev. A. Cowley Letters, Cowley to the Secretary, Dec. 10, 1854. Cowley estimates the population at about five hundred. Since by 1854 annual increases of twenty-five appear usual eight hundred would probably be a reasonable though conservative estimate by the late 1860's.

⁴"Hudson's Bay Missions," Methodist Reports, 1859-60, p. xxi.

⁵M. E. J., Dayspring in the Far West (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1875), p. 24.

⁶C.M.S.A., O, Stagg to Venn, Oct. 24, 1863. Stagg gives the total number of houses as thirty. This usually represents two hundred fifty to three hundred people.

⁷"White Fish Lake," Methodist Reports, 1863-64, p. xxiii.

⁸"Victoria," ibid., 1866-7, p. xviii. H.B.C.A., B.60/a/34, fo. 76, Fort Edmonton Journals, Aug. 2, 1865 notes the arrival of Donald Todd and several Red River country-born settlers at Victoria.

⁹P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to McLaren, July 25, 1868, p. 53.

This distribution of successful missions coincides almost exactly with the areas populated by the "Thickwood Indians."¹⁰ especially the "Muskegos" or "Swampy Crees," and Saulteaux.¹¹ Capt. W. F. Butler observed that the latter

extend westward from Portage-la-Prairie to Fort Ellice, and from thence north to Fort Pelly and the neighbourhood of Fort à-la-Corne, where they border and mix with the kindred race of Swampy or Muskego Crees. . . . [These] inhabit the country west of Lake Winnipeg, extending as far as Forts Pelly and a-la-Corne, and from the latter place, in a north-westerly direction, to Carlton and Fort Pitt.¹²

Both tribes' life was of the most precarious nature, their bow and arrows feeble weapons against the bear, moose and deer; the principal means of subsistence. The hard life of the forest seldom permitted them to gather in groups of more than four to ten families.¹³

Accordingly when the white man arrived with guns and iron tools existence became more secure. The Swampy Cree and Saulteaux had close opportunity to observe the European, marry into his race and participate in his way

¹⁰Butler, op. cit., p. 375. This term refers to all those tribes inhabiting the forest as distinct from the prairie North-West.

¹¹Of the two groups apparently the Saulteaux were less amenable to a settled life though only slightly so. A. C. Garrioch, First Furrows (Winnipeg: Stovel Company Limited, 1923), p. 92 suggests that this was because they were "not so easily persuaded that the belief of their forefathers was a mistake."

¹²Butler, op. cit., p. 374-5.

¹³A. S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West, pp. 10-21.

of life. As the Indians began to frequent the same trading post or posts, they probably felt it unnecessary to take their families on the hunt and in at least one instance near Norway House spontaneous settlement resulted.¹⁴ The Indian women that remained were more often than not put to work in the potato and barley patches that lay about the Company posts.¹⁵ When the missionaries especially the Anglicans began to preach settlement and salvation in the 1840's the Indian was sufficiently aware of its benefits to regard the proposal if not ecstatically at least with favor.

The same argument can be made with regard to the equally "wretched and destitute" Thickwood Stonies and Saskatchewan Wood Crees of central Alberta. Where settlement was commenced at Pigeon Lake (Woodville), White Fish Lake and Victoria, they formed the preponderant portion of what Indian population there was. That these tribes were not settled in similar numbers to the "Swampies" was due in large part to the itinerant technique of the missionaries, for success was made in conversion to Christianity.¹⁶

As Rev. Henry Budd noted the opposite was the case

¹⁴Supra, p. 25n.

¹⁵See for example, H.B.C.A., B.89/a/6, fo. 1, a/22, fo. 15, a/32, fo. 2, Isle à la Crosse Journals, 1834-1863; and C.M.S.A., O, Hunt, Journal, Dec. 6, 1851.

¹⁶J. Palliser, Exploration. British North America . . . (London: G. E. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1863),

with the Plains Indians.

The Muscago Crees are more mixed up with the white people, they learn much of their ways and habits. They seem ripe to receive the Gospel wherever they are met with, but it is different with the Crees who inhabit these vast plains to the West. They seldom ever see the white people in all their life. They have few opportunities of learning the civilized life. They are truly heathen and truly barbarous.¹⁷

The tribes that inhabited the Plains, the Plains Cree and especially the various Blackfeet tribes led a virtually independent existence based on the great buffalo herds.¹⁸ They had no need for the missionary's agriculture or his charity. In addition if a Thickwoods settlement was commenced on the prairie fringe the warlike tendencies of the Plains Indians disrupted the attempt. Pigeon Lake was abandoned by Benjamin Sinclair because of a massacre¹⁹ and Steinhauer's mission had to be moved from Lac La Biche to White Fish Lake to avoid the roving Blackfeet war parties.²⁰

While the nature of the tribe appears to be a principal factor governing the geographical distribution of the settled Indian population the capacity of the settlements to absorb new converts merits consideration.

pp. 203-4.

¹⁷C.M.S.A., M.5, Budd to the Secretary, Jan. 13, 1853. The emphasis is Budd's.

¹⁸Morton, op. cit., pp. 14-5.

¹⁹Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 18-9.

²⁰John MacLean, Henry Bird Steinhauer (n.p., n.d.),

Of the northern settlements²¹ only Lac La Ronge²² and Oxford House²³ appear to have been unable to settle all those natives willing. The Indian's fear of starvation made him reluctant to congregate at either settlement since both had uncertain fisheries and little more than swamp and rock as soil.²⁴ Though at the Indian Settlement the situation was similar--more Indians requested assistance to commence farming than could be accommodated--this appears to have occurred only once, in 1833, and only a few were refused.²⁵ Similarly at Pigeon Lake Benjamin Sinclair's lack of knowledge and tools prevented him from assisting approximately a half dozen families.²⁶ At all other settlements the number of willing Indians appears to have coincided or more usually been substantially less than the capacity for assistance.²⁷

p. 28.

²¹Moose and York are not included in this reference as they rarely figured in schemes for agricultural settlements.

²²C.M.S.A., M.5, Hunt to the Secretary, May 30, 1850.

²³"Oxford House," Methodist Reports, 1855, p. xxxiii.

²⁴C.M.S.A., O, Settee to the Secretary, July 19, 1850.

²⁵Ibid., M.1, Cockran to the Secretary, Nov. 12, 1833.

²⁶M.M.S.A., Box 16, Letter 144, Sinclair to Mason, Eggmoon 10, 1849.

²⁷S.P.G.A., E.18, Document 10223, Thomas Cook to W. H. Taylor, n.d.

This explains the size of the settlements but not the growth pattern of the missions that proceeded beyond the "take off" stage, i.e., the initial five to six families. While only the pattern of the Indian Settlement can be determined with any degree of accuracy, those of The Pas, Fairford, and Rossville appear similar. Growth for the first few years was slow, phenomenal the next ten or fifteen depending on individual circumstance, and uniform and for the most part internal thereafter. Exceptions exist but they are of minor significance. Victoria's and Portage La Prairie's populations for example were determined largely by the migrations of English half-breeds. Prior to 1870 diseases, especially measles, only in a few unimportant instances seriously disrupted growth.

Cockran achieved his first breakthrough in 1832, settling seven families.²⁸ By 1835 the populations had reached 193²⁹ and by 1843, 434.³⁰ The 1846 census however indicates a disruption in the pattern. Dysentery,³¹ crop failure,³² and Catholic competition,³³ caused a decrease

²⁸Mountain, op. cit., p. 206. Ross, op. cit., p. 279, states that only three Indians settled.

²⁹P.A.C., M.G.9, E.3, Red River Census, 1835, p. 167.

³⁰Ibid., 1843, p. 278.

³¹C.M.S.A., O, Smithurst, Journal, Aug. 1-Nov. 1, 1846.

³²Ibid., M.4, Smithurst to the Secretaries, Nov. 18, 1846.

³³H.B.C.A., A.12/4, fo. 520, Simpson to Committee,

to 368.³⁴ By 1849 normality had returned and the population climbed to an unprecedented 460.³⁵ Unfortunately this is the last year for which the Red River census was available and the only other figure for St. Peter's is for 1856, 596.³⁶ It would appear then that from 1835 to 1843 the average increase was thirty persons per year levelling to approximately twenty after 1849. Similar patterns can be observed at The Pas and Fairford. Indications are that the largest increase at The Pas was between 1845 and 1852,³⁷ and at Fairford between 1848 and 1860.³⁸ Insufficient evidence exists to determine a pattern for Norway House but in all probability the peak period of growth was from 1840-50.³⁹

June 30, 1847.

³⁴P.A.C., Red River Census, 1846-7, p. 323.

³⁵Ibid., 1843, p. 278.

³⁶Canada, Legislative Assembly, Report on the Exploration of the Country between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement (London: George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1859), p. 124.

³⁷C.M.S.A., M.4, Hunter to the Secretary, Sept. 9, 1845 indicates two houses; O, Hunter, Annual Report, Aug. 1, 1851 seven new houses and O, Hunter, Journal, Oct. 19, 1852 and O, George to the Secretaries, Aug. 7, 1856 both thirty houses.

³⁸Ibid., M.4, Cowley to Venn, July 7, 1848 indicates seven houses and O, Stagg to Venn, Oct. 24, 1863 thirty houses.

³⁹Both H.B.C.A., A.12/8, fo. 15, Simpson to Committee, June 26, 1856; and D.1/5, fo. 308, Mason to Simpson, June 30, 1849 give the population of Norway House at about three hundred. "Hudson's Bay Missions," Methodist Reports, 1859-60, p. xxi indicates that growth was for the

It is difficult if not impossible to account adequately for the declining rate of increase. It can be argued that the population in the vicinity of these settlements was almost entirely absorbed. With regard to Rossville, The Pas, Fairford and the Indian Settlement this appears conceivable. In 1852 Capt. Lefroy, who had just spent two years in Rupert's Land, calculated the total number of Indians in the vicinity of The Pas at three hundred, essentially the same figure as the two or three hundred settled at the mission.⁴⁰ The estimated aboriginal population in the vicinity of Manitoba House, two hundred, and Norway House, three hundred, also corresponded closely to the populations of the nearby missions, Fairford and Rossville. The remaining twenty-five hundred Swampy Crees in what is now Manitoba would explain the continuing though smaller number of conversions. Rendered by distance less susceptible to the missionary's persuasion, they nevertheless would be attracted to the settlements' charity and relative security in conditions of scarcity.

If the above postulation is indeed true, the missionary would have at least in Christian and civilized eyes have scored an immense victory. Yet as the following

most part internal.

⁴⁰All the figures are from Capt. J. H. Lefroy, "On the Probable Number of the Native Indian Population of British America," The Canadian Journal, I (1852-3), pp. 193-8. Lefroy's observations are substantiated in Palliser, op. cit., p. 200 and H. Y. Hind, North West Territory, Reports of Progress (Toronto: John Lovell,

description of the settlements and their economy will indicate the victory was pyrrhic, a victory of the nineteenth century. The settlements, though supported for the most part by the fur trade, would have collapsed without the missionary.

This is most apparent in the "government" of the settlements. The upper level, the Company, has already been discussed in the second chapter. In the settlements spiritual authority theoretically rested with the missionary and temporal power with the Indian chief. At the Indian Settlements the latter was Pegwis,⁴¹ at The Pas Charles Cook and Louis Constance,⁴² at Fairford Acuscoocat⁴³ and later Paquonchees,⁴⁴ at Portage La Prairie Pa-kwan-ki-kun,⁴⁵ at Lac La Ronge Jacob Bird⁴⁶ and at White Fish Lake James Seenum.⁴⁷ If the Indian Settlement is an accurate reflection

1859), p. 114.

⁴¹West, op. cit., p. 20 suggests that Pegwis was a Saulteaux while P.A.C., Red River Census, 1835-49 places him with the Swampy Cree. C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran, Journal, April 9, 1833 solves the discrepancy. Though a Saulteaux, Pegwis granted a quantity of land for settlement to the Swampy Cree, eventually joining the settlement and assuming leadership.

⁴²Ibid., M.4, Hunter to Venn, Aug. 8, 1849.

⁴³Ibid., M.3, Cowley, Journal, Jan. 29, 1843.

⁴⁴Ibid., M.4, Cowley to Venn, July 7, 1848.

⁴⁵Garrioch, op. cit., p. 92.

⁴⁶C.M.S.A., O, Hunt, Journal, Nov. 1850.

⁴⁷Sam Bull, 100 Years at Whitefish 1855-1955 (Whitefish: Whitefish United Church, 1956), p. 4.

of the other settlements their authority was minor. Although apparently Cockran considered Pegwis a landed pagan potentate⁴⁸--owner of the whole of the Indian Settlement--there is every indication that this was no more than a façade. Indeed in 1833 Cockran threatened Pegwis with deposition if he refused to move from Netley Creek to Sugar Point.⁴⁹ Similarly at White Fish Lake it was Steinhauer who appointed the Chief's three "aldermen."⁵⁰ The Chiefs where they existed were consulted in order to secure the more ready compliance of their followers and given special assistance to assure their prosperity and therefore pliability. It was the missionary who became the fountain of law and justice. Effectiveness varied with the missionary. Cockran and Evans could be most forceful while others like Smithurst and Cowley found it difficult to control their charges.

In the case of the Indian Settlement a third body merits consideration, the Council of Assiniboia. It regulated the day to day aspects of agricultural life in Red River. The Minutes of the Council of May 4, 1834 illustrate the scope of its influence--they concern pigs and stallions roaming at large, fires, statute labour for the improvement of roads, public fairs, haying privileges

⁴⁸C.M.S.A., O, Cowley, Annual Letter, Feb. 25, 1860 and O, Smithurst, Journal, Feb. 5, 1844.

⁴⁹Ibid., M.1, Cockran, Journal, July 4, 1833.

⁵⁰Bull, op. cit., p. 4.

and the like.⁵¹ It is difficult to determine if these regulations applied to the Indian Settlement. In an 1851 report to the Council on limitations to its authority Recorder Thom maintained that

the Indian tribes do not stand on the same footing as British subjects. Our local legislature, for instance, does not appear to be competent to regulate their right of cutting hay for themselves beyond the two-mile line, being the boundary of the ceded lands, and accordingly in 1847, Mr. Governor Christie's proclamation as to the date of beginning to cut hay, was understood not to extend to the members of the Indian tribes.⁵²

That specific mention should be made of the hay privilege, and that St. Peter's was in one of the judicial districts of Red River⁵³ would seem to suggest that the Council did have jurisdiction over the parish. The phrase "for instance" however could be construed to indicate that the Council was further limited than Recorder Thom suggested. No mention is to be found either in the Council's minutes or in the various missionaries' correspondence of any Indian ever being fined for violation of a Council by-law. It is not improbable that the missionary settled most of the disputes over roaming stallions, rooting pigs and the like.

Cockran's Portage La Prairie, more an extension of Red River than a mission although a few Indian families

⁵¹E. H. Oliver, ed., The Canadian North West Its Early Development and Legislative Records (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1915), I, p. 263.

⁵²Ibid., p. 371.

⁵³Ibid., p. 580.

were settled there,⁵⁴ appears to have had the only spontaneous organized government outside Red River. English half-breeds principally from St. Andrew's selected from their midst a council of seven persons and a president. They were to

take cognizance of all offences committed against the public, and individual interests of the Community . . . [and] administer justice according to the local laws of Red River.⁵⁵

The government however proved "a perfect failure" causing "great agitation" and "political strife."⁵⁶ Even in 1864 a request⁵⁷ for annexation to Red River was heatedly opposed by half the population for undetermined reasons.⁵⁸

The government of the missions except perhaps at Portage La Prairie were symptomatic rather than a cause of the native's almost complete dependence on the missionary. The failure of agriculture was the cause. Though superficially astoundingly successful; climate, inexperience and a constant exhortation on the part of the missionaries to greater sophistication prevented the individual Indian farms from ever becoming self-sustaining.

In an analysis of agriculture at the mission settlements some general indication of the area under

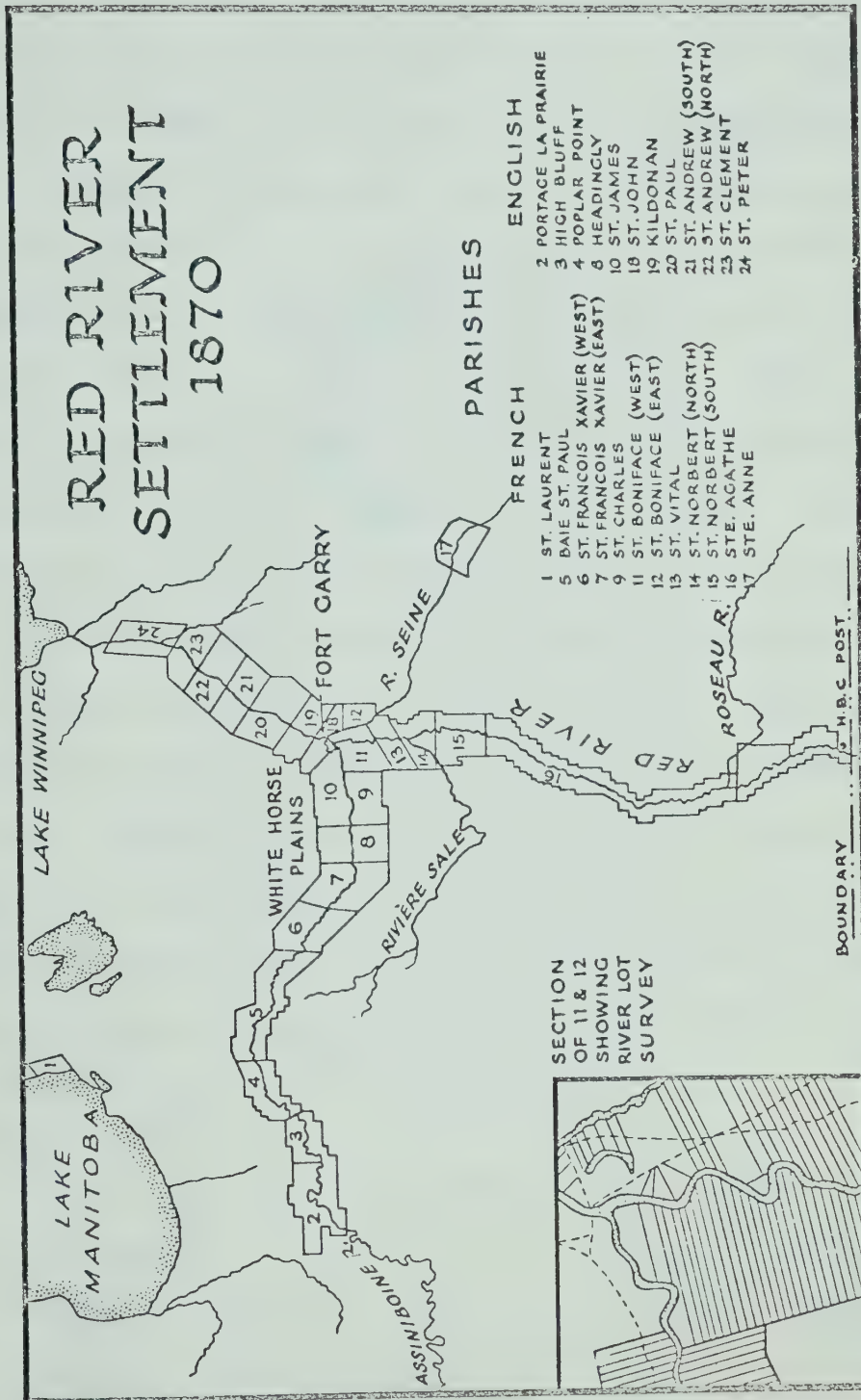
⁵⁴C.M.S.A., M.5, Cockran to Venn, March 4, 1855.

⁵⁵Ibid., O, Cockran, Journal, July 29, 1859.

⁵⁶Ibid., O, George, Journal, April 29, 1867.

⁵⁷Oliver, op. cit., p. 539.

⁵⁸H.B.C.A., A.12/44, fo. 269, MacTavish to Committee,



G. F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1966), p. facing 14.

cultivation should be attempted. At the Indian Settlement there were eighteen acres in 1835,⁵⁹ other than the mission farm's thirty-five.⁶⁰ By 1840 the Indians had 56.5 acres,⁶¹ by 1843, 170 acres,⁶² by 1846-7, 151 acres,⁶³ 1849, 200 acres⁶⁴ and 1856, 302.5 acres.⁶⁵ More meaningful perhaps is the number of acres per person, varying from about .1 in the early 1830's to .5 in 1843 where it apparently remained. Compared to the other parishes of Red River the figure is decidedly low. In 1856 St. Paul's and St. John's, the agricultural core, averaged 2.3 and 2.1 acres per person respectively and St. Andrew's and St. James' predominantly British pensioned fur traders, 1.4 acres per person.⁶⁶

The average farm in the Indian Settlement after 1843 fluctuated between 2.5 and 3 acres. There was however a greater variance than this average would indicate. In 1849 for example James Johnstone had the largest farm with eight cultivated acres. Of the seventy-nine farms only eight had more than five acres, eighteen from three to five and thirty from one to three. Nineteen cultivated no

March 12, 1867.

⁵⁹P.A.C., Red River Census, 1835, p. 101.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 154.

⁶¹Ibid., 1840, p. 239.

⁶²Ibid., 1843, p. 278.

⁶³Ibid., 1846-7, p. 323.

⁶⁴Ibid., 1849, p. 49.

⁶⁵Canada, 1859 Report, p. 124.

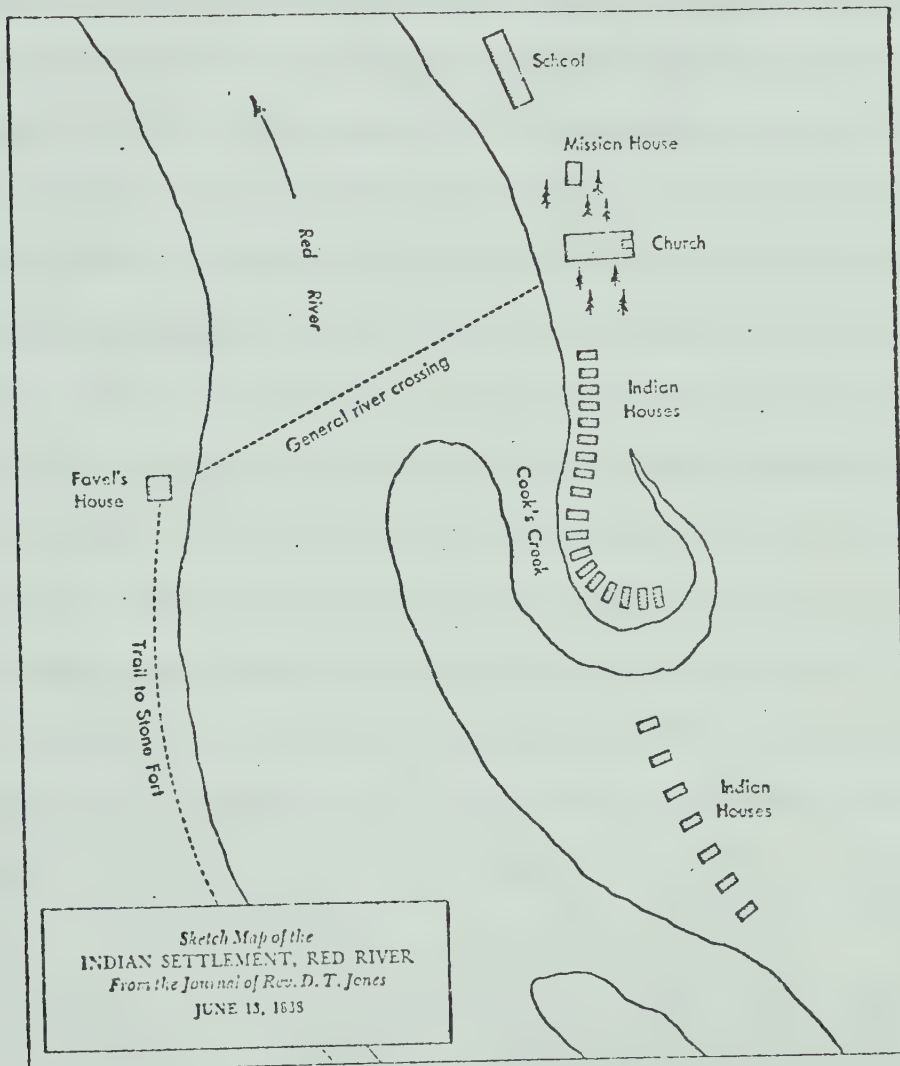
⁶⁶Ibid.



INDIAN SETTLEMENT AT THE RED RIVER

1845

Mountain, op. cit., p. frontispiece.



land whatsoever. The mission farm of some forty acres in addition to Cockran's farm of thirty acres probably constituted one of the largest blocks of agricultural land in any one person's control in Rupert's Land.⁶⁷

Rossville, Cumberland and Partridge Crop, the interior settlements that most closely resembled the Indian Settlement, had comparatively smaller farms. At The Pas in 1857 there were only six Indian potato gardens and four barley patches.⁶⁸ In addition there was at least one sizeable alluvial island in potatoes belonging to one of the more prosperous and diligent Indians of the settlement.⁶⁹ The mission itself had two fields of undetermined size, though they must have exceeded ten acres by 1850.⁷⁰ Of Partridge Crop even less is known. In 1845 the natives had "thirteen small patches" under cultivation and Cowley a patch 240 by 160 yards,⁷¹ increased to 297 by 290 yards three years later.⁷² The situation at Rossville was similar. The general pattern was small patches of potatoes producing twenty bushels in the 1840's⁷³

⁶⁷P.A.C., Red River Census, 1849, p. 43.

⁶⁸C.M.S.A., O, George, Journal, July 18, 1857.

⁶⁹Ibid., O, Budd, Journal, Sept. 25, 1854.

⁷⁰Ibid., O, Hunter, Journal, Dec. 14, 1850.

⁷¹Ibid., O, Cowley to the Secretary, July 29, 1845.

⁷²Ibid., M.4, Cowley to Venn, July 1848.

⁷³H.B.C.A., D.5/11, fo. 228, Evans to Simpson, May 16, 1844. See also M.M.S.A., Box 14, Letter 277, Mason to

to as many as two hundred bushels per farm family in the late 1860's.⁷⁴ Even so by the early sixties the settlement's mission farm and Indian potato and barley patches could not have exceeded sixty acres with the mission farm no more than ten acres.⁷⁵

The situation at the smaller northern missions was apparently no better and more often worse. Most contemporary descriptions of the Indian gardens and mission farms emphasize the diminutive adjectives "little" or "small." In 1850 Settee calculated that Lac La Ronge with forty cultivable acres⁷⁶ other than a potato patch had six square yards under turnips.⁷⁷ Even Stanley, a more genial location, had at the most three acres under cultivation by 1867.⁷⁸ Jackson's Bay, the Methodist mission, could only muster one acre in 1854.⁷⁹

On the prairie fringe at Prince Albert only six Indians⁸⁰ cultivated a potato patch though Nisbet himself

the Secretary, Dec. 22, 1845.

⁷⁴Ibid., Box 22, Letter ?, Stringfellow to the Secretary, Sept. 5, 1864.

⁷⁵"Norway House," Wesleyan Notices, May 1857, p. 179.

⁷⁶C.M.S.A., O, Settee to the Secretary, July 19, 1850.

⁷⁷Ibid., M.5, Hunt to Venn, Aug. 22, 1850.

⁷⁸Ibid., M.7, MacKay to the Secretary, Dec. 9, 1867.

⁷⁹Rev. J. Ryerson, Hudson's Bay (Toronto: G. R. Sanderson, 1855), p. 99.

⁸⁰P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to McLaren, July 25, 1868, p. 53.

did have over forty acres under cultivation by the late 1860's.⁸¹ At Whitefish Lake several Indians had small plots with the mission farm itself extending to eight or ten acres.⁸² Victoria probably had less, and Pigeon Lake almost a negligible quantity.⁸³ Stations like Fort Ellice,⁸⁴ Fort Pelly,⁸⁵ and Nepowewin,⁸⁶ were all small with no more than five acres under cultivation.

In spite of the relatively minute amounts of land under cultivation and the vast emptiness of Rupert's Land, land tenure of a sort existed. Private property was considered an indispensable virtue of civilization, a certain impetus to economy and diligency. At The Pas and Partridge Crop Smithurst⁸⁷ and Cowley⁸⁸ divided the arable land around the mission into river lots with two chain frontages. This pattern was also followed at Victoria, Portage La Prairie, Prince Albert and the Indian Settlement.

⁸¹E. H. Oliver, "The Beginnings of Agriculture in Saskatchewan," Trans. of the Royal Society of Canada, XXIX, Series III, Section II (May, 1935), p. 15.

⁸²"Edmonton, Rocky Mountains," Methodist Reports, 1863-65, p. xxiii.

⁸³"Edmonton and Rocky Mountains," Wesleyan Notices, May 1857, p. 195.

⁸⁴S.P.G.A., E.18, Document 8791, Cook, Journal, Aug. 31, 1864.

⁸⁵C.M.S.A., O, Pratt, Journal, May 21, 1859.

⁸⁶Ibid., O, Budd to the Secretary, Aug. 8, 1862.

⁸⁷Ibid., M.3, Smithurst to the Secretary, Aug. 1, 1842.

⁸⁸Ibid., O, Cowley, Journal, May 16, 1847.

There is no indication however that the peppercorn lease, prevalent in Red River, was ever instituted or any form of title deed issued to the Indian.⁸⁹ Missionaries may have kept land registries to avoid conflict but no records of such exist.

The nature of the terrain at Lac La Ronge, Oxford House and to a lesser degree at The Pas forced the abandonment of the riparian pattern and the adoption of a scattered patchwork that corresponded with the arable soil. Each patch was surrounded by a fence to indicate ownership as well as keep out wandering livestock. Rossville's Evans and White Fish Lake's Steinhauer, both without a Red River background, allowed the Indians to adopt the haphazard patch system.

Crops were of the most unsophisticated sort. The potato, the staple of the fur trade, was also the staple of the missions. It was exceptionally easy to grow, needed little processing and had a relatively high yield. Its only drawback was its susceptibility to disease and the care required to preserve it through the winter. At the small mission centres, especially those in their nascent

⁸⁹Peppercorn leases, usually for one thousand years, the principal form of land tenure in Red River, contained various restrictive clauses, forbidding for example the alienation and subdivision of the river lot without the Company's consent and demanding settlement within forty days and cultivation of one-sixth or one-tenth of the lot depending on the deed within five years. Copies of the various forms of the leases are to be found in Oliver, The Canadian North West, II, pp. 1293, 1296, 1299, 1300 and in Great Britain, 1857 Inquiry, p. 361.

stages, this was the principal if not the only crop. On the larger farms at the more substantial settlements while always of major importance it was invariably accompanied by barley. Only in rare cases did barley exceed the potato crop in importance.

Wheat⁹⁰ was much more difficult to grow and only in the Indian Settlement and Partridge Crop⁹¹ was its culture attempted to any extent by the natives. At the other settlements it was grown on the mission farms and though Prince Albert did manage to produce some six hundred bushels⁹² in 1868 it rarely met with success and could never be relied upon with any degree of certainty. Oats and rye were also attempted though they never proved popular. There is no indication that flax, hemp, hops or millet were raised by the Indians though they were by the mission farms, ever willing to experiment.⁹³

In addition to the potato, barley and very occasional wheat patch most families attempted a kitchen garden. Some missions, often with success, grew onions, cabbages,

⁹⁰For an examination of the theory that an early ripening variety of wheat had been developed at Red River see W. L. Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River."

⁹¹C.M.S.A., O, Cowley to the Secretary, July 22, 1846.

⁹²E. H. Oliver, "The Presbyterian Church in Saskatchewan," Trans. of the Royal Society of Canada, XXVIII, Series III, Section II (1934), p. 73.

⁹³Even at Pigeon Lake buckwheat was attempted. "Edmonton and Rocky Mountains," Wesleyan Notices, May 1857, p. 552.

celery, parsley, endive, rhubarb, radishes, beets, broccoli, and shallots. This variety did not penetrate to the native settlers and at best sizeable quantities of turnips and lesser amounts of carrots, peas, beans and lettuce were raised depending upon location. It is worthy of mention that in 1845 some Indians at the Indian Settlement made requests for sunflower and poppy seeds to commence flower gardens.⁹⁴ Probably Mrs. Cowley's flowering shrubs, annuals, mignonettes, orange eschscholtzia, asters and sweet peas provided the stimulus.

The Indian Settlement as in all aspects of agriculture possessed the greatest variation and quantity of livestock. The most popular were oxen, 160 in 1856, essential if any quantity of land were to be put under the plow. As important were milk cows and pigs numbering 139 and 155 respectively.⁹⁵ Pigs were especially coveted since they required little care except a crude shelter in the winter to prevent the freezing of their extremities. Sheep were less popular. "Gaunt, grim, wolfish-looking dogs"⁹⁶ caused a decline from the sixty-eight introduced in 1843⁹⁷ to nine in 1856.⁹⁸

The only other settlements that attempted as great

⁹⁴C.M.S.A., O, Smithurst, Annual Report, Aug. 1, 1845.

⁹⁵Canada, 1859 Report, p. 124.

⁹⁶Nor'Wester, April 18, 1864.

⁹⁷P.A.C., Red River Census, 1843, p. 278.

⁹⁸Canada, 1859 Report, p. 124.

a variety were The Pas and Partridge Crop. Cowley in his founding expedition drove a motley herd of five cows, three heifers, eight calves, six ewes, six sheep, two pigs and four chickens.⁹⁹ Unfortunately by 1855 only the cattle remained and only the occasional farm possessed an ox, pig or cow.¹⁰⁰ On the other hand by 1857 The Pas managed an ox for almost every farm family.¹⁰¹ Though Rossville was the most progressive Methodist mission and next to the Indian Settlement the most populous it could boast no more than six or eight cows after sixteen years.¹⁰² Victoria was equally poor with four milch cows and an ox in the late 1860's.¹⁰³ Nisbet of Prince Albert, much better financed, began with twelve oxen and three cows¹⁰⁴ but as at Victoria there is no indication that these were distributed to the Indians. Nepowewin, Fort Ellice and Oxford House, all apparently destitute of livestock, were more representative of the majority of the missions.

While the techniques of agriculture were relatively simple on the Indian farms, at the mission farms they were of a more complex nature. Hunt at Lac La Ronge boated

⁹⁹C.M.S.A., M.3, Cowley, Journal, Aug. 4, 1842.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., O, Stagg, Journal, July 25, 1856.

¹⁰¹Ibid., O, George, Journal, July 18, 1857.

¹⁰²"Norway House," Methodist Reports, 1856, p. xxx.

¹⁰³McDougall, Saddle, Sled and Snowshoe, p. 147.

¹⁰⁴P.A.M., Nisbet Correspondence, Nisbet to Burns, June 20, 1866, p. 31.

sand to the mission farm and constantly manured the soil with a mixture of aquatic plant life and fish to lighten the heavy clay soil.¹⁰⁵ Even the McDougalls in spite of the expanse of empty fertile land in the vicinity of Victoria, always manured and deep ploughed their fields.¹⁰⁶ Fallowing was also a common practice.¹⁰⁷ Cockran, probably the most knowledgeable of any of the clergy, even constructed extensive drains at Cook's Inlet six miles above Sugar Point to drain swamps for the mission and the Indian farms.¹⁰⁸ He also provided the technology and impetus for the two windmills at the Indian Settlement.¹⁰⁹

While Indians like James Johnstone¹¹⁰ may have practiced the higher techniques of farming as illustrated by Cockran few others except perhaps the reluctant students at the boarding schools did so.¹¹¹ In the Indian Settlement there was never more than one plough for every two or three farms.¹¹² Ploughing, where not undertaken by the

¹⁰⁵C.M.S.A., M.5, Hunt to Venn, Aug. 22, 1850.

¹⁰⁶J. McDougall, In the Days of the Red River Rebellion (Toronto: William Briggs, 1905), p. 203.

¹⁰⁷C.M.S.A., M.3, Smithurst, Annual Report, Aug. 1, 1846.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., M.1, Cockran, Journal, July 4, 1833.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., M.2, Cockran, Journal, Aug. 21, 1835.

¹¹⁰P.A.C., Red River Census, 1849, p. 43.

¹¹¹C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran to Bickersteth, Aug. 3, 1829.

¹¹²Canada, 1859 Report, p. 124.

missionary or his agent as it was in nearly all settlements of small population or in the nascent stages of development, must have been communal. The hoe and spade were however by no means unusual and were used for breaking land as well as the cultivation of the potato patches and kitchen gardens. Harvesting of grain was inevitably by scythe. There is no evidence of reaping machines being possessed by any of the Indians prior to 1870 though some at Rossville,¹¹³ the Indian Settlement and Portage La Prairie had sufficient wealth to purchase them.¹¹⁴ Storage was no less crude. Usually the grain was thrown in a corner of the hut, or amongst the more prosperous in a loft and thrashed when needed. Potatoes and root vegetables were stored in a cellar in front of the fire place.

Unfortunately this subsistence agriculture was unable to support the settlements or to form the basis for an agrarian economy. The years of failure outnumbered those

¹¹³"Norway House," Methodist Reports, 1856, p. xxx. One Indian had fourteen pounds to import a "first-class cooking stove" from St. Paul.

¹¹⁴Garrioch, op. cit., p. 95f. Pachetoo at Portage La Prairie could have conceivably had one. Residing next to the parsonage in the heart of the settlement he was one of the few to attempt a lawn, seed for which was imported from the United States. Much to the amusement of his neighbours ". . . the front of his house underwent no change, unless it was that the low-growing and accommodating house-weed, or knot grass . . . appeared in unusual luxuriance, suggesting . . . that some smart Yankee had gathered a lot of the ripe house-weed, and sold the seed to their enterprising customer as a good sample of the very thing he had ordered."

of success.¹¹⁵ At the Indian Settlement for example 1832, 1833, 1838, 1843, 1846, 1847 and 1865¹¹⁶ were emphatic failures and 1840, 1855, 1856, 1857 and 1867 probable ones.¹¹⁷ Grubs, heavy rains, early frosts, the Hessian fly, grasshoppers, smut, blight, hail and floods in varying combinations devastated crops. Even in the most bountiful years like 1836 and 1841 the Indian farms barely "rubbed through."¹¹⁸ Only the missionary holdings of some seventy acres at Red River managed to supply the Indians at the Settlement as well as in the interior with sufficient seed to prevent the complete abandonment of the farms. Cockran and Smithurst more than once sent seed to Cumberland, Fort Ellice and Partridge Crop.¹¹⁹ Similarly The Pas mission farm when possible supplied Lac La Ronge and

¹¹⁵This pattern of failure prevailed at all other missions with monotonous regularity. An interesting article claiming that the cause of these crop failures was a harsher climate than prevails today is F. G. Roe, "Early Agriculture in Western Canada in Relation to Climatic Stability," Agricultural History, XXVI-XXVII (July, 1952), pp. 104-23.

¹¹⁶C.M.S.A., M.1, Cockran to Coates, Oct. 10, 1832; M.1, Cockran, Journal, April 28, May 28, June 10, 1833; O, Cockran, Journal, Aug. 3, 1838; O, Smithurst, Journal, May 12, 1843; M.4, Smithurst to the Secretaries, Nov. 18, 1846; O, Smithurst, Journal, June 30, 1847; and O, Cowley, Annual Letter, Jan. 8, 1865.

¹¹⁷M. Giraud, Le Métis Canadien (Paris: Institut D'Ethnologie, 1945), pp. 770, 781. Since not every missionary report in the various societies' archives contains sufficient information to determine crop conditions, the years of failure for Red River in general, listed by Giraud, have been assumed years of failure for St. Peter's.

¹¹⁸C.M.S.A., O, Smithurst, Annual Report, 1841.

¹¹⁹Ibid., M.3, Smithurst, Annual Report, Aug. 1843.

Nepowewin. Methodist missions apparently had no central supply farm and procured most of their seed and livestock either by individual purchase at Red River or more often through the Company.¹²⁰ The result was however the same.

The missionary was quite aware that

when families have nothing to eat at home . . . they betake themselves to the plains for buffalo, or the lakes for fish. Thus both parents and children are withdrawn for several months from all religious instruction.¹²¹

The missionary, firmly convinced that with sufficient thrift and extended cultivation the calamity could have been averted, gave the Indian new seed and ploughed additional land to encourage a new start. In winters of lesser severity when food was merely scarce the problem was even more acute for then the Indian remained at the settlement and when his potatoes were consumed he "had none to look to for help but the Missionary."¹²² The greater the population the greater the calamity. Agriculture and charity were combined in a never ending circle--by the former's very uncertainty the Indian was dependent on the missionary.

A second factor reinforcing this dependence was the Indian's own inexperience.

He [the Indian] cultivates his lands imperfectly, he

¹²⁰H.B.C.A., B.154/b/9, fo. 30, Grahame to Dallas, Dec. 26, 1862.

¹²¹C.M.S.A., M.4, James to the Secretary, Aug. 2, 1848.

¹²²Ibid., O, Cockran, Journal, July 26, 1852.

generally defers sowing till a later period unlike the prudent man. He provides a smaller quantity of provender to supply his cattle thro the winter. Thus if blight, smut or frost visit us, one or other of these are sure to fall upon the small patch of ground which he has cultivated. If a hungry wolf [attacks] the Indian cattle, . . . weak and spiritless from the small quantity of food which they have received, he overtakes them with ease, and quickly destroys them for his prey. If disease makes its appearance among the cattle, they suffer the most from the same course.¹²³

The missionary believed that only constant exhortation and supervision could overcome the disposition of the Indian to live day by day and neglect his farm. Supervision was meticulous to ensure that ploughing was commenced at the correct time, that the furrows were deep enough, later that cultivation and weeding were regular and that harvesting was not neglected. Even haying expeditions were closely regulated. When new techniques were introduced like cattle breeding or a mill built the technology came from the missionary. This supervision strengthened the Indian's subordinate position and ensured the missionary's continued dominance.

Though the Methodists tended to place less emphasis than the Anglicans on agriculture their situation was in actuality not much different. Charity and encouragement were not absent though supervision may not have extended to every aspect of agriculture. Hurlburt's activities at Rossville make this quite clear.

There is such a swarm of little ones about our village as I have rarely seen . . . Food and clothing must be

¹²³ Ibid., M.4; Cockran to the Secretary, Aug. 1, 1849.

provided for these, or they will perish, or be scattered. The resources of the country are sufficient, if developed to sustain quite a population. Potatoes are about the only thing cultivated. They now desire to add the turnip and I am preparing to supply them with seed. I want to introduce the culture of barley and flax; the latter for the sake of fish nets.¹²⁴

The same climate that forced the Indian to depend on the Anglican clergyman could hardly discriminate in favor of the Methodist.

The agricultural mission was the principal focal point of the Indian's social and religious life. There lived his wife or wives, his children, his indigent relatives and his missionary. He nevertheless spent a substantial amount of time hunting, tripping and fishing. Very few Indians remained the whole winter at the settlements. The pattern for Rossville was characteristic of all the missions of the "Forest North-West."

Some leave the Mission in August and we never see them again until July, some leave in September and return late in June but a good number remain at the Mission make excellent fisheries in the Autumn and when they have secured their potato crops and cached their fish they start off into the forests generally in pairs leaving their families at the village and their children to go to school. These hunters return several times during the Winter and are always present in our Festival occasions and feel quite at home when they return . . .¹²⁵

The winter hunt was for furs and not provisions--to repay

¹²⁴"Extract from a private letter from the Rev. Thos. Hurlburt, dated Rossville, Aug. 20th, 1856," Christian Guardian, Nov. 19, 1856.

¹²⁵M.M.S.A., Box 20, Letter 345, Mason to Simpson, June 1853.

the Hudson's Bay Company for debts incurred in the spring, summer and fall. Hunting for game was sporadic and usually confined to the immediate vicinity of the missions. Only in the case of missions on the prairie fringe like White Fish Lake, Victoria, and Prince Albert did the mission Indian and half-breed engage in the buffalo hunt.

The summers at Rossville,¹²⁶ The Pas,¹²⁷ and the Indian Settlement were occupied in tripping. The importance of the trip to these the largest settlements is indicated by Cockran. In 1837 the Company in an attempt to stop migration to Red River decreed that the Indians could no longer trip to York.¹²⁸ Cockran though opposed to the trip in principle felt that without it the mission would collapse or else be considerably reduced in size.

Whatever may be their ostensible reason for this resolution, the real motive is to harrass and starve the Indians that are already located, to drive them to the necessity of returning to a state of barbarism. All the young and able men of the Indian Settlement go some of them one trip to York, and other two--They get five pounds for the voyage. This enables them to clothe themselves decently. Now they imagine by cutting off this which is the only course from which they can get their clothing excepting hunting, they will be under the necessity [of returning] to a barbarous state. This is a masterly stroke of worldly policy by which they expect to strangle the Protestant Mission in Rupert's Land.¹²⁹

¹²⁶H.B.C.A., A.12/10, fo. 171, Simpson to Committee, June 21, 1859.

¹²⁷C.M.S.A., M.4, Hunter, Annual Report, July 1848.

¹²⁸Oliver, The Canadian North-West, II, p. 763.

¹²⁹C.M.S.A., M.2, Cockran, Journal, Oct. 9, 1837.

With the introduction of the Methodists at strategic northern posts the measure was apparently abandoned and tripping remained an important source of hard currency for the mission until the 1880's.

Equal to and in the early stages of development surpassing agriculture as the principal food "staple" were the fisheries.¹³⁰ This is especially true of the Thickwood settlements like Whitefish Lake, Pigeon Lake, The Pas, Lac La Ronge, Stanley, Fairford, Rossville, Jackson's Bay and occasionally the Indian Settlement. Stagg confided in 1863 that Fairford was "more a fishing village than an agricultural one."¹³¹ Those settlements on the prairie fringe like Prince Albert, Victoria and Fort Ellice substituted the buffalo hunt. Though undertaken throughout the year the largest quantity, sometimes as many as fifteen to twenty thousand, were caught in the late fall, usually in nets supplied by the missionary.¹³² Stored in an ice house they were to last until May. A few Indians fished for the entire settlement and only in scarcity did all the members of the settlement take to the lakes.

These four activities, hunting, fishing, tripping

¹³⁰ Ibid., O, George, Journal, Sept. 2, 1856. George believed that "fish when continually fed upon encourage sleep and lethargic habits which may account for the gross indolence common to the Indian."

¹³¹ Ibid., O, Stagg to Venn, Oct. 24, 1863.

¹³² Ibid., O, Hunt, Journal, June 5, 1854.

and agriculture, were thus closely inter-related. No single activity could provide an adequate living. Of this the missionary was keenly aware.

They cannot live by hunting, fishing, or making trips to York Factory, these occupations will only supply a portion of their wants.¹³³

Agriculture was however the principal link in this four link chain. If it failed the settlements along with the labour base for the trip dispersed. Yet

as a whole, it [agriculture] had failed to expand beyond the point where it could feed the local population without the help from the hunt or the fisheries, or to develop sufficiently to survive a local calamity such as the grasshopper plague of 1868.¹³⁴

Even had it expanded there would have been no markets. They were as dismal as the condition of agriculture itself. Although a number of outlets existed: the settlements themselves, the Red River, the various travellers and explorers, and the military; the market was virtually controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company, the largest single consumer. The inferior quality of the Indian's produce never allowed him to capture any of these markets, except the first. In a prosperous year they were already glutted by the Red River settler.¹³⁵

¹³³Ibid., M.5, Cockran to the Secretary, July 24, 1842.

¹³⁴W. L. Morton, op. cit., p. 320.

¹³⁵See for example Great Britain, 1857 Inquiry, p. 391, evidence of George Gladman; Ryerson, op. cit., p. 159; Hargrave, Red River, p. 80; and McLean, Notes of a Twenty-Five Year's Service, p. 388.

The material life established at the mission, satisfactory though extremely tenuous, would have been impossible without the fur trade of the nineteenth century. A minor depression in any sector of the mission economy threatened hardship and threw the Indian upon the missionary's charity. It was a way of life that could hardly survive the nineteenth century intact.

V. CONCLUSION

The agricultural missions were almost a complete failure. They could not hope to survive the nineteenth century. They failed to modify or provide an alternative to the Federal Government's reserve system and the life it offered. Instead they reinforced it. Any material success the missions had was confined to the period prior to 1870, to the Thickwood Indians and dependent on the fur trade.

The basis for the mission economy was slowly and imperceptibly eroded leaving the Indian almost totally dependent on the negligible proceeds of agriculture and the Indian agent's less than gracious dole. The hunt and fisheries became progressively less reliable in the late 1860's.¹ By the end of the century the increasing population in the vicinity of the missions had so overhunted the neighbouring areas that in many cases the fur bearing wildlife was almost extinct.² As the Indian could not meet the debts incurred with the Hudson's Bay Company and this was the first charge against income he was progressively pauperized.

¹ Ibid., p. 321.

² Canada. Department of Indian Affairs. Black Files. R.G. 10, File 24161, Rev. F. G. Stevens to David Laird, Aug. 13, 1901. Hereafter cited as Black Files.

In addition, by 1874 the trip which had hitherto provided with the hunt the principal source of income was seriously curtailed. The Hudson's Bay Company now imported their supplies for the inland trade through Winnipeg instead of York Factory. Secondly and perhaps as important the York boat was being gradually replaced by steam. Also in 1875 the Company contemplated the abandonment of the "Long Portage" to the MacKenzie District. This brigade alone gave employment to fifty Rossville Indians. This revolution in transportation threw approximately two hundred Rossville Indians out of employment. The effects were felt in all of the missions along the major water routes of the Canadian Shield: The Pas, Jackson's Bay, Fairford and the Indian Settlement.³

At the same time the migrations from York that Simpson had managed to stop with the introduction of the Methodists resumed. Not only had work vanished with the decline in the importance of York but its fur resources were depleted. The Rossville Indians were particularly alarmed at the increase at their settlement which they felt unable to feed.

The settlement is increasing, our kindred from the north regions of Hudson's Bay are coming up higher to escape from starvation and cannibalism.⁴

³Ibid., File 4060, ? to Alexander Morris, April 6, 1875.

⁴Ibid., Item 2, Rossville Swampy Crees to the Editor of the Winnipeg Free Press, Feb. 22, 1875.

Destitution prevailed. Rev. F. G. Stevens, the incumbent Methodist missionary, outlined the prevailing situation at Rossville and Jackson's Bay in the late nineteenth century.

The people were clothed in rags and old rabbit skins. They were reduced to skeletons by hunger and were existing chiefly on berries . . . All round us at Oxford House and in every winter camp there was dire hunger . . . many Indians died of sheer starvation after a winter of suffering. Hunger and nakedness prevailed in the whole neighbourhood . . . The Indian was frequently reduced to use bark and lichens as food.⁵

The solution offered by the Indian and the missionary alike was mass migration to the more fertile lands near White Mud River (the Grassy Narrows).⁶ This it was thought would not only ease the pressures on the resources of the existing missions but give the fur bearing animals a chance to increase. The Department of the Interior was however most reluctant to sanction the migrations. First, "the best trained and most energetic men would be the first to go" and leave those behind in a worse predicament than before.⁷ Second, there are indications that the Hudson's Bay Company may have proved obstructive. The Company wanted neither the responsibility for the care of the remaining "old and useless people" nor

⁵Ibid., File 24161, Stevens to Laird, Aug. 31, 1901.

⁶Canada. Department of the Interior. Annual Report . . . for 1879 (Ottawa: MacLean, Roger & Co., 1880), p. 73. As early as 1878 a small number had already migrated to the Narrows.

⁷Black Files, File 24161, Stevens to Laird, Aug.

the loss in fur profits the migrations would cause.⁸

Apparently a spontaneous and unsanctioned migration to the Grassy Narrows relieved the desperate situation at Norway and Oxford House though it added an infinite number of knots to the Department's bureaucratic tape.

The largest and most prosperous of the pre-1870 settlements, St. Peter's or the Indian Settlement, disintegrated more slowly. Although the changing economy was a factor, white and mixed-blood infiltration and the resulting land question were even more important. The legality of Pegwis's ownership, though in question ever since the founding of the Indian Settlement, emerged as a heated issue in the 1860's. There was considerable doubt as to the terms of the treaty Lord Selkirk had made with Pegwis, Les Grand Oreilles, Blue Robe and the Red Lake Chief.⁹ Pegwis maintained that Selkirk had allowed him to retain the land from Sugar Point to Lake Winnipeg for his own use after a re-negotiation of the treaty "some days after" the original "sale." Red River settlers like Andrew McDermot maintained that Pegwis had sold all, that

⁸Ibid., Laird to Stevens, Aug. 20, 1901. See also Stevens to Laird, Aug. 27, 1901 in the same file. Stevens accused the Hudson's Bay Company of selling "government flour" instead of distributing it free. He was convinced that the distribution of relief supplies to the Indians at the northern missions by the Company for the Department of the Interior required close supervision. It is hardly conceivable that a Company with so honorable a record prior to 1870 would have engaged in such contemptible activity. Laird completely ignored the accusation.

⁹"The Land Question," Nor'Wester, March 14, 1860.

the land from Sugar Point to Lake Winnipeg was open to settlement, and that only the Company need be consulted for purchase.¹⁰ In spite of the pleading and opposition of Cockran, Cowley and Smithurst, white settlement continued to infiltrate St. Peter's.¹¹ The conflict remained dormant for some ten years after 1860 and again rose when the parish was made a reserve. After extensive hearings by Justice Howell in 1906 the reserve was finally abolished the following year. Each Indian family received a patent for eight acres of land. Three thousand acres were set aside for an Indian hay privilege. The remaining twenty-five thousand acres were sold at public auction. Half the proceeds were divided amongst the Indians with the remaining half set aside as an endowment. In addition another reserve of some seventy-five thousand acres¹² was located at Fisher River on the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

The Indian was however unable to make the adjustment to a predominantly agricultural economy. To be successful he required a more sophisticated technology and larger holdings. For this he had neither the capital, inclination nor knowledge. The Indian agent was well aware of the difficulties.

¹⁰"Peguis Refuted," Ibid., Feb. 29, 1860.

¹¹C.M.S.A., Cowley, Annual Report, Jan. 31, 1862. Supra, p. 16 (III).

¹²Canada. Department of Indian Affairs. Annual Report . . . for 1908 (Ottawa: S. E. Dawson, 1908), pp. 81, 196.

In the old days he [the Indian] could find continuous employment with the traders and explorers or at hunting and fishing on his own account. He received a small wage, but it was sufficient to maintain him at the then standard of living. At the present time he cannot hunt and fish all the year round, as he is prevented by game and fishing regulations.¹³

Most of the Indians at St. Peter's sold their patents and moved to the new reserve at Fisher River.

Not all the former missions experienced such calamities. Those like Pigeon Lake, Prince Albert and Qu'Appelle, which had been of but little significance prior to 1870, grew in importance. Yet their growth depicted not the success of the pre-1870's but the conditions of the post-1870's. The reserves forced the Indian into a confined area where he was much more accessible to the missionary.¹⁴

If the economy of the agricultural missions of the pre-1870's failed to make the transition to the twentieth century the missions themselves remained intact, even if their populations were split by migrations as at Norway House or relocated entirely as at St. Peter's. A most important question remains however to be answered. Were these missions more able to cope with reservation life than those which had never been subject to the influence of the missionary and his agricultural technology?

Obviously the Thickwoods of the Canadian Shield

¹³Ibid., p. 85.

¹⁴Black Files, File 3557, John MacKay, Report on the Saskatchewan district, n.d. (187?).

had a single overwhelming and insoluble problem. The terrain of these northern missions was as Hunt noted

water or rocks, the latter covered in some places with moss; in others some trees, chiefly Pines, Birches, Poplars, and Willows have rooted themselves in the chasms of the rocks into which a little decomposed vegetable matter has been driven by the winds and rain; the greater part of the dry land is naked granite.¹⁵

Where cultivable soil did exist it was strewn with boulders more often than not of immense size. Cultivation of any extent no matter the assistance available was impossible. While the settlements of The Pas, Rossville, and Fairford were of course further advanced than the newer settlements on other reserves in the initial years¹⁶ they did not continue to progress and by 1900 they had been equalled by most of the newer settlements.¹⁷ The Whitefish Lake band for example put substantial acreage under cultivation in 1879 to ward off impending starvation but so did some neighbouring bands which had been without a missionary prior to 1870.¹⁸

¹⁵C.M.S.A., M.5, Hunt to the Secretaries, July 25, 1850.

¹⁶Black Files, File 3229, C. N. Bell, Preservation of the Buffalo, 1874. See also in the same file M. G. Dickinson to the Minister of the Interior, Jan. 7, 1875 and file 8933, Alexander Morris to the Minister of the Interior, Nov. 2, 1877.

¹⁷This is apparent in a comparison of any of the reports from the various agencies contained in Department of Indian Affairs, 1906 Annual Report as well as the reports of the preceding and following years.

¹⁸Department of the Interior, 1879 Annual Report, p. 105.

St. Peter's was apparently the only pre-1870 settlement to sustain its growth in spite of the setbacks of the later nineteenth century. In 1874 they had to beg the Department of the Interior for seed.¹⁹ Nevertheless in the early twentieth century prior to the relocation of the reserve the Indian agent could report that

the standard of living amongst the Indians has been higher and in a measure kept pace with that of their white neighbours. The young men and women all dress well, and only the old people and the really needy avail themselves of the clothing distributed by the missionaries.²⁰

This prosperity was not however due to improvements in agriculture but to the "industrial activity" near Selkirk. With the decline of this activity and the relocation of the reserve in 1907 agriculture suffered another setback. None of the successful pre-1870 missions managed to sustain an upward economic growth. By 1900 they were virtually indistinguishable from the more recent reserve settlements.

There was however a germ of an idea that could have allowed for a vigorous and less dependent type of reserve life. This was Venn's "Native Church" policy as enunciated in his "Minute upon the Employment and Ordination of Native Teachers," outlined in chapter three.²¹ Had the ultimate goal of "self support, self government and

¹⁹Black Files, File 3325, Indian Board Minutes, April 21, 1874. See also file 4057, Indian Commissioner's Office to ?, April 8, 1875.

²⁰Department of Indian Affairs, 1909 Annual Report, p. 85.

²¹Supra, p. 63.

self extension" been implemented in the agricultural mission settlements the internal structure of some reserves might have been substantially different. Unfortunately the missionary's preconceived notion of the Indian's inferiority and susceptibility to vice reinforced by the Indian's apparent inability to support himself through agriculture made paternalism appear the only reasonable policy. The Chief became a nominal figure head, the missionary the final authority. After 1870 the latter was readily assisted or replaced by the Department of the Interior and later the Department of Indian Affairs as the source of guidance and livelihood.²² While the economy of the missions may have been shaken in the last decades of the nineteenth century the values determining Canadian attitudes to the Indians remained the same.

Church historians like Riddell and Boon, respectively Methodist and Anglican, would consider the missions with greater optimism. The advent of the reserve meant not so much a continuation of the old paternalism as much as "new opportunities to the Church."²³ In 1877 for example Rev. J. A. MacKay opened missions on the Moosomin, Thunderchild, Sweet Grass and Red Pheasant Reserves, and in 1878 Rev. George MacKay one on the Piegan reserve near the inter-

²²For a brief description of Federal Government Indian policy in the prairie west see G. F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), pp. 216-42.

²³Boon, op. cit., pp. 160-1.

national boundary south of Calgary. In the following years the missionary managed to establish himself at most reserves. By 1908 there were ten Methodists, thirty-eight Anglicans and five Presbyterians scattered on the various reserves in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.²⁴ Activity was primarily confined to education with agriculture left to the government farm instructors. Christ triumphed--agriculture emphatically did not.

The real success of the missions was confined to the period before 1870. The missionary irrespective of denomination, though the Anglicans more than the Methodists and the Methodists more than the Presbyterians, provided the Indian, especially the Thickwoods, with a better material existence. It was an existence that may in some of its spheres have depended on the missionary but there were freedoms--the most important the freedom to abandon settlement life. The Indian could now congregate in communities the size of which in a complete hunterlike state would have spelled starvation. While in most cases the existence was at the bare subsistence level it could reach the pinnacle that Pacheeto achieved at Portage La Prairie in the 1860's. His case is however most assuredly the exception and not the rule. The editor of the Nor'Wester after visiting the Indian thought him equal if not in some aspects superior to the European and half-breed

²⁴Department of Indian Affairs, 1909 Annual Report, Part II, pp. 12-6.

settler.

Pechettoe had fine Yankee chairs in his house; and when I lit my pipe, he actually drew forth a nice spittoon and placed it before me, which showed either that he thought me rude enough to spit on his flooring or that he, at least was fond of a clean flooring. Is not even this little incident suggestive? A spittoon is usually regarded as the following offspring of an advanced state of society--hardly the thing for a poor heathen Indian.²⁵

Pachettoo even had surplus seed wheat which he sold at substantial profit to the jealous and less prosperous European settler.

Success was not however confined to material progress. Prior to 1830 the Indian had been subject "to only one element of British civilization, the fur trade."²⁶ To this the missionary added Christianity and agriculture. Both functioned to stabilize the Northwest. By 1835 there were at least 381 Indians tenting in the vicinity of Red River--160 about the Sugar Point alone.²⁷ Had the migrations of the late 1830's continued the consequences for Red River would have been dire. The settlement, barely able to support itself, could never have fed the seven or eight hundred starving and indigent Saulteaux and Swampy Cree that would probably have

²⁵"Another Fine Picture of Indian Life," Nor'Wester, May 14, 1862. Pachettoo's achievements are even more remarkable since he may have been heathen. Garrioch, op. cit., p. 96 however implies him Christian. Pachettoo, a phonetic spelling, appears more common than the Nor'Wester's Pechettoe.

²⁶Foster, op. cit., p. 1

²⁷P.A.C., Red River Census, 1835, p. 168.

congregated around the settlement. The missionaries localized this impulse to migrate--he rendered the native more "docile." This is not to indicate that there was no longer a threat, but that it was minimized. It now came not from the north and east but from the plains, the south and west, primarily from the Sioux.²⁸

Even to say that the missions experienced some success is however to minimize the dilemma especially of those missions in the crescent from The Pas to the Indian Settlement along Lake Winnipeg. Obviously agriculture was the only possible alternative to the hunt. In the successful missions, a success dictated by circumstances other than missionary effort (i.e., the proximity to major transportation routes, the nature of the tribe and their length of contact with the European) agriculture could never reasonably function as an economic base given the harsh climate and absence of a substantial market. Alternately to criticize the missionary for failing to encourage or even opposing the diminishing hunt as an alternative would be equal folly. Neither an economy based on agriculture, nor the hunt, nor both could support the missions permanently. It was this dilemma as much as the missionary's and Indian's cultural predilections or the Hudson's Bay Company's opposition that dictated failure. Palliser, though making special reference to the Stoneys,

²⁸Ross, op. cit., p. 324f.

was early as 1859 aware of the consequences.

Meanwhile, to revert to the condition of these Stoneys, their conversion to Christianity, however flattering to our missionary efforts, and perhaps at first beneficial to them, yet if unaccompanied by some effort to improve their permanent condition, will really tend only to their extermination; for the diffusion of the doctrines of docility and weakness will only render them more defenceless and less fitted for that struggle for existence which they must maintain till they are supplied with more civilized means of livelihood. If such means are not speedily supplied to them, so that they shall have made some progress towards independence before the influx of white men, who will inevitably, sooner or later, occupy the fertile country of the North Saskatchewan, these Stoneys, along with the Thickwood Crees, will share the fate of all other Indians . . .²⁹

In supplying these means the missions failed. The progress of the pre-1870's could not be sustained.

²⁹Palliser, op. cit., p. 204.

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An adequate bibliography for the missionary movement can be gleaned from Bruce Braden Peel, A Bibliography of the Prairie Provinces to 1953 (Toronto: 1956). It must be emphasized however that much of the more scholarly work has been done since 1953.

No single work exists on the Hudson's Bay Company and its relations with the missionaries. Philip A. Lehman's M.A. thesis, "The Religious, Moral and Educational Activities of the Hudson's Bay Company" (University of Oregon, 1929) has an extended discussion of the Company's attitudes but is lacking in both interpretation and the use of primary sources. While John E. Foster's M.A. thesis, "The Anglican Clergy in the Red River Settlement" (University of Alberta, 1966) is more substantial it is confined to the period before 1826. A. S. Morton's classic History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 (Toronto, 1939) and E. E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company (Toronto, 1961) provide only brief indications of the Company's attitudes but are invaluable for placing the missions in the context of the fur trade. Obviously the principal source must be the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. The "A series" containing the "Outward Correspondence" of the London office reveals ample material for analyzing the London Committee's policies.

The "Minute Books" are much less valuable. The "B series," i.e., the individual post journals and correspondence books are useful for determining the activities at the posts and nearby missions. Unfortunately the "Fort Edmonton Correspondence Books" from 1840-60 are blurred and illegible. The "D series" especially Simpson's voluminous "Inward Correspondence," "Outward Correspondence," and "Annual Reports," 1821-60 supplies the backbone of the material outlining the execution of policy and the missionary reaction. It is here that the bulk of the missionary correspondence, especially Methodist, is found.

Of the three Protestant denominations the Anglicans are the best documented. The Church Missionary Society Archives are extensive, complete and reasonably well organized, since the Society demanded of their agents regular reports and Journals on the state of the missions. The "L" sub-classification, "Letter Books, Dispatches, Outgoing 1821-1882" of the "C.1 Rupert's Land" series provides some insight into the views of the various Secretaries of the Society though the documents are often faded, blurred and illegible. The greatest wealth of material lies in the "M" series, "Mission Books, Incoming Letters, 1822-1876) and the more complete "O" series, "Original Letters, Journals, Papers, Incoming 1822-1880." None of the Church Missionary Society periodicals like the Church Missionary Society Gleaner and Church Missionary

Intelligencer were consulted. The letters and journals for these periodicals were drawn entirely from the Society's archives and the editor's careful pen indicates what has been published and what censored as unworthy of publication. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archives are less valuable for the purposes of this thesis. Of their missionaries only one, Thomas Cook, went into the interior. Most of the letters are to be found in the "Letters Received from Overseas, Diocese of Rupert's Land." The missionary letters in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, not included in the Societies' archives, are few in number and of no great import. C. F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G. (London, 1901), Eugene Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society (London, 1899) and T. C. B. Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies (Toronto, 1962) provide excellent histories of the Anglican movement in Rupert's Land and have not been equalled by any other denomination. Unfortunately all three tend to chronology and to optimistic interpretation. Sarah Tucker, Rainbow of the North (London, 1851) and M. E. J. Dayspring in the Far West (London, 1875) contain more contemporary accounts of missionary work and if imbued with excessive missionary zeal they nevertheless reflect the spirit of the age. W. B. Heeney, ed., Leaders of the Canadian Church (Toronto, n.d. & 1943) second and third series, provide reasonably concise and in many cases the only biographies of West, Cockran,

MacDonald, Settee, Budd, Pratt and others.

The Methodist Missionary Society Archives are much less complete than their Anglican counterparts. The Society apparently did not require annual reports or journals. What original correspondence there is, is poorly organized and from physical appearance ravaged by fire. Reliance must therefore be placed almost entirely on the Missionary Society Reports of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, the Wesleyan Missionary Notices and the Christian Guardian. Other than these, Robert T. Rundle, Journal 1840-48, Rev. J. Ryerson, Hudson's Bay (Toronto, 1855) and John McDougall's, Forest, Lake and Prairie (Toronto, 1895), In the Days of the Red River Rebellion (Toronto, 1905), On Western Trails in the Early Seventies (Toronto, 1911), Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie (Toronto, 1898), and Saddle, Sled and Snowshoe (Toronto, 1896), the latter all children's adventure stories, are the only sustained eye-witness narratives of missionary activity before 1870. The Hudson's Bay Company Archives "D series," James Hargrave, The Hargrave Correspondence 1821-1843 (Toronto, 1938), Letitia Hargrave, The Letters of Letitia Hargrave (Toronto, 1938) and Nan Shipley, The James Evans Story (Toronto, 1966) contain much material on James Evans and the first group of Methodists, and the accompanying period of excitement and scandal. J. H. Riddell, Methodism in the Middle West (Toronto, 1946) is the Methodist counterpart to Boon but the work is emphatically less adequate. John MacLean's Henry B.

Steinhauer (Toronto, n.d.), James Evans Inventor of the Syllabic System of the Cree Language (Toronto, 1890), McDougall of Alberta (Toronto, 1927) and Vanguards of Canada (Toronto, 1918) are all biographies essential for any study of the Methodist effort but all five tend towards martyrology, and form the basis for the myths that have sainted more than one Methodist sinner.

The material for the Presbyterian mission is limited. Nisbet's "Diary" is merely an undated provision list. The Home and Foreign Record of the Presbyterian Church of Canada and the transcripts of the Nisbet correspondence must remain the greatest source. The Presbyterians still lack a Boon or Riddell. Of the efforts to date G. W. D. Abrams, Prince Albert: The First Century 1866-1966 (Saskatoon, 1966) provides the only well structured, documented and critical account. It is however by no means definitive, and must be supplemented by works like John C. Walker's Ph.D. dissertation "The Early History of the Presbyterian Church in Western Canada from the Earliest Time to 1881" (University of Edinburgh, 1928).

For the post 1870's, in addition to the Societies' archives the Department of Indian Affairs (Black Files), Department of Indian Affairs, Annual Reports and the Department of the Interior, Annual Reports are essential. G. F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada (Toronto, 1966) sketches the situation of the reserves in the 1880's.

It must be emphasized that the following bibliography

is by no means definitive. Most of the religious tracts, and the marginally useful histories of the various denominations are omitted. Of the pamphlet literature only the more credible and useful items like David T. Greene, Christ Church The Pas Manitoba (The Pas, 1931), Rev. G. Hutchinson, Memorial Booklet Written on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary Celebrations Honoring the Arrival of the Rev. Thomas Woolsey and Rev. H. B. Steinhauer (Edmonton, 1965) and Sam Bull, 100 Years at Whitefish 1855-1955 (Whitefish, 1956) are included. Although many of the published fur trade journals and accounts comment on the missions, in general they would add much bulk and little substance to the bibliography. Only those with extended or particularly pertinent comments like George Simpson, Fur Trade and Empire (Cambridge, 1968) and John McLean, Notes of a Twenty-Five Year's Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory (London, 1849) are included.

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